

THE LIVING AGE

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A WEEK OF THE WORLD

THE FRANCO-BRITISH-GERMAN TRIANGLE

THE *Vossische Zeitung* and the *Berliner Tageblatt*, the two leading Liberal dailies of the German metropolis, are both controlled by Jewish editors of cosmopolitan outlook, whose views, nevertheless, have differed widely regarding nearly every question of foreign policy which has confronted Germany since before the war.

The *Berliner Tageblatt* opposed and the *Vossische Zeitung* favored the submarine campaign. The *Tageblatt* is 'Pro-English,' and the *Vossische Zeitung* 'Pro-French.' That is, the former believes that Germany should shape its alliances around a British centre, while the latter advocates a so-called 'continental policy' of Franco-German domination upon the mainland. Recently the *Vossische Zeitung* has been very actively supporting the latter view, and one of its most distinguished correspondents, Alexander Redlich, has visited Paris, where he received friendly attentions from French officials. Last week's article, entitled 'Paris Impressions,' and this week's article upon 'Franco-German Trade' are to be read in the light of this campaign in favor of friendlier relations between the two nations.

RUSSIA'S POLISH POLICY

THE London *Morning Post* published in parallel columns the following contradictory public statements made by the Bolshevik Government:

Lenin's Letter, September 1, 1919, to French Comrades

There still remains the Western front, which, on the map of our revolutionary strategy, only possesses a third-rate importance. The Polish nobility — the *szlachta* — is gaining the temporary successes of robber bands. We can watch this temporary advance of the feeble Polish troops without being too alarmed. When we have finished with Denikin — and the day is near — we will throw ourselves on to that front with overwhelming reserves.

Proclamation to Polish People. Published in the 'Call' May 6

They [French and English capitalists] are trying to force the Polish people in to a new adventure, making them believe that when we have conquered the counter-revolutionary force of Kolchak, Denikin, and Judenich (after a hard and strenuous struggle), we, the Russian people, will traitorously attack the Polish army for our military purposes. . . . But our mutual enemies are telling you a lie in making you believe that the Soviet Government is going to introduce Communism on Polish soil by the means of the Red army's bayonets.

AMERICA'S WELFARE WORK IN GERMANY

MANY Americans will be interested in learning at first-hand how Germany regards the welfare work being con-

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ducted in that country under the direction of the American Society of Friends. Commenting upon the labors of this organization in Berlin a correspondent of the *London Observer* describes the daily procession of children armed with bowl and spoon going to the meals given by the Quakers and looked forward to by these little ones with the greatest joy:

Foreign aid came later to Berlin than to other hungry capitals; it has even been met with resistance on the part of those Prussians of the old school who could not bear the thought of 'begging.' However, actual pangs and common sense have prevailed. At present the populace is most deeply interested in the 'uncle' in America. It seems that all Berliners have an uncle in America who went out fifteen — twenty — twenty-five years ago, and has either written since, or has n't, according to the exigencies of circumstances. However, Mr. Hoover's 'food-draft' system has been wonderfully productive of freshening up family ties. It is pleasant to see the joy of a family who receives a food-parcel at last through this method of dispatch.

According to a recent Berlin dispatch needy university students, in spite of the academic opposition described in a recent article in the *LIVING AGE*, have also reconciled themselves to receive assistance from the same source. We publish elsewhere in this issue a pleasing sketch of still another department of this work — the summer outing colony for poor city children in the Harz Mountains.

AN ECHO FROM THE PEACE CONFERENCE

A LADY member of the German Peace Delegation at Versailles recently related some of her experiences and impressions to a representative of *Pester Lloyd*. Referring to Wilson, Lloyd George, and Clemenceau she said:

I had an opportunity to observe these gentlemen closely. Clemenceau made the strongest impression on me. He is a sturdy, vigorous man with a remarkably mobile countenance — un-

deniably a great man. In spite of the harshness which is attributed to him in his dealings with us, the conquered, that worthy son of the Vendée, whose resolute determination was never shaken in the slightest by Parisian intrigue, betrayed nothing harsh or repellent in his countenance; he rather gave the impression of being a genial, kind-tempered man.

Wilson appeared to me as if his facial expression and his whole figure were petrified in a painful, artificial posture, and I kept wondering whether this revealed the real nature of the man or was a mask donned for the occasion.

Lloyd George, although his attitudes were designed to indicate even from afar the great statesman, retains something in his manner, which even in his old age seems to suggest his orphaned and humble childhood. That human touch possibly carried particular weight with me as a woman; especially when I meditated later upon the way this Briton, who had fought his way up from such humble circumstances, always kept the main issue of material, practical advantage in mind, and was after all so little swerved by appeals to abstract justice.

BOLSHEVISM IN PERSIA

THE *London Morning Post*, in an alarmist article upon the Bolshevik advance in Persia, alludes to 'the notorious Kuchi Khan,' who was formerly the chief figure in a society formed in North Persia by Persian students of extreme socialistic principles, known as the 'Brotherhood of the Forest.' This organization is still active, and its members are now called 'Janglis.' The latter are not a tribe, as stated in certain books about that country. Kuchi Khan was for a time a provincial governor, and in 1917 declared for the Turks. Later he came to terms with the British, but more recently has been a refugee.

Avanti, the official organ of the Italian Socialists, quotes extensive evidence of the rapid propagation of Bolshevik doctrines in Mohammedan Asia. A leading local paper, *Iran*, has published a series of articles showing that Bolshevik teaching incorporates the pure evangel of Islam, and is but a modern and political version

of all that Mohammed taught of religion in the Koran. Even polygamy and freedom of divorce are cited in support of this argument. The Bolsheviks are represented as the spiritual allies of the Persians, and their providential saviors from the English. Another newspaper published at Teheran, the *Saday*, after tracing a parallel between Mohammed and Lenin, devotes itself to a virulent attack upon England, which it accuses of trying to make Persia another Egypt or Afghanistan. All the larger cities of Persia are said to have been the scene recently of violent uprisings, which have been ruthlessly suppressed. However, insurrection remains practically unchecked throughout the country regions.

POST-BELLUM PROBLEMS IN SPAIN

SPAIN'S abstention from the war has not prevented a housing crisis in that country. In the large cities the demand for apartments is so great that new buildings are leased from roof to basement before construction is fairly under way. In Madrid the population has increased thirty per cent since the outbreak of the war. The recent arrivals are not only newly enriched Spaniards, but also refugees and visitors from belligerent countries, who during the war sought the Spanish capital as a peace oasis. The population of the city is now approximately one million, or an average of seventy-two for every building. Its density of population is believed to be greater than that of any other large town in Europe, or two hundred and seventy-one per hectare (over one hundred per acre) as compared with two hundred per hectare in Paris and one hundred and twenty-eight in London. In the central portion of the city the population reaches seven hundred and seventy-three per hectare. It should

be recalled in this connection that the buildings do not as a rule contain so many stories as in our own country.

La Epoca reports the following incident to illustrate profiteering in that country:

A few days ago a shoe manufacturer visited Valladolid to see his son, who is a student in the cavalry school at that city. The two went out to buy a pair of shoes which the young man needed in some emergency, for which the seller demanded forty-five pesetas (about \$9.00). When the purchasers protested the merchant said: 'The manufacturers charge me forty pesetas at the factory. I cannot afford to handle them for less than five pesetas.' The father of the young man was able to reply: 'These shoes were made in my own factory and they cost you, delivered here at your shop, just twenty-five pesetas.'

Upon the recent visit of Marshal Joffre to Spain an unpleasant incident occurred during his reception at Barcelona, where he presided over the floral fêtes. Catalan separatists seized the opportunity to stage a demonstration against the Central Government. They sang the Catalan hymn of independence alternated with the *Marseillaise*, and shouted: 'Death to Spain!' 'Long live free Catalonia!' 'Long live Ireland!' and 'Tangier for France!' The crowd also manifested in other ways its hatred and contempt for Madrid rule. According to some accounts the distinguished French guest shortened his visit as a result of these embarrassing occurrences, which some Spaniards say were secretly instigated in France itself.

NEW THINGS IN JAPAN

By the roundabout way of Germany comes the following extract from an article by General Sato in a Japanese army magazine:

Many officers hate the word democracy as though it were the plague, and fear that it will undermine discipline and introduce lawlessness and revolution. Such notions are dangerous.

We cannot oppose this movement by force. We must learn to comprehend and utilize democracy. Abraham Lincoln's words 'A government of the people, by the people, and for the people' must be put into effect. However, in Japan we must qualify the word 'people'; for the immortal traditions and the national constitution of our country demand that the supreme organ of government retain its authority. Self-determination has no place in the army. Above all, not in times of war, when the soldier must go through fire or water at the command of his leader. However, officers must study to understand better the men whom they command, and must show more consideration for their opinions.

While discipline must be strictly maintained, we must always bear in mind that officers are men dealing with fellow men. Some officers try to maintain their authority by keeping aloof from contact with their soldiers, never addressing them as friends and comrades. This artificial discipline undermines the mutual confidence which should exist between the rank and file and their officers, and creates discord which can be used to promote unjust demands, a false conception of democracy, and the disintegration of all authority.

The teaching of Confucius, 'The nation must learn to trust and not to understand,' has been applied too rigidly in the Japanese army. As recently as our war with Russia it was considered a mark of excellent discipline when soldiers never made complaints. At that time many officers occupied positions for which they were not qualified. In these days officers must treat the men they command in a more democratic spirit.

Americans may have some difficulty in understanding just where this democracy begins.

NEXT October the World Sunday-School Convention will meet in Tokio. It will be an international event, bringing delegates from every portion of the earth. Some twenty-five hundred are expected to be in attendance. Japan's metropolis is not provided with European hotel accommodations for so large a number, and its leading citizens, without regard to religious affiliations, propose to throw their homes open to the visitors. National pride, a genuine spirit of

hospitality, and a lively appreciation of the economic advantage of making Tokio a convention city for Occidental visitors, have more to do than religious sympathy with this action.

The London *Morning Post* publishes a rather critical communication from its Tokio correspondent with regard to the whole plan of holding such a meeting in the Orient. The criticism reflects the attitude of many merchants and officials residing in the Far East toward western missionary and religious efforts in that region. However, the following matter-of-fact observation is worth bearing in mind, as likely to temper the over-optimism which may prevail in some quarters regarding the practical religious results of holding this convention in Japan:

It is quite remarkable to see great Buddhist bankers, leading Confucian industrial magnates, and numbers of rich Shinto drapers busy promoting the Convention, obviously under the conviction that the injury to the religion of Japan as a result of it will be nothing compared to the economic return from a flood of cash-laden foreigners.

EUROPEAN CONTRASTS

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Kölnische Zeitung* records some of his impressions during a journey from that city to Budapest as follows:

When I left Cologne sausages and hams were freely displayed in every meat shop, and cheese and eggs were offered in such abundance that one could have as much as he wished, provided he was able to pay for them. In Frankfurt the snowiest white bread was on public sale, and I bought what I wished without ration-cards. The cities in Germany through which I passed were fairly clean, although not so faultlessly tidy as they used to be. Order and tranquillity prevailed everywhere. People with fixed incomes, pensioners, government officials, and the educated classes were obviously in more or less distress. But upon the whole there was no evidence of chaos, and I observed on every hand eagerness and effort to escape from the oppressive conditions which still prevailed. . . . So

far as transportation was concerned, the railway carriages were still clean and well warmed. I had to wait only two hours at Frankfort and one hour at Munich to get my trains. Most of the officials I met were courteous and helpful.

Once I crossed the Polish border; and I still remember how I had to pinch my arm to convince myself that I was wide-awake and that my eyes were not deceiving me. Directly up to the border were well-kept fields and forests, fine roads, tidy houses—in a word, all the evidences of culture and civilization. The minute we crossed that line highways seemed almost to disappear, and houses became dilapidated and makeshift hovels, and everywhere my eyes met evidences of neglect and backwardness. That former experience came back vividly to my mind when we drew near the glorious mountains around Salzburg. After passing the customs, I had ten hours to wait before a train left for Vienna. The only gratifying sight that greeted my eyes was the sun glow on the snow-capped peaks.

In every other respect I was in a different world. The shops were barren and empty, and people were standing in long queues waiting to buy trifles which in Germany we have begun to forget we ever lacked.

At the hotels and restaurants one paid enormous prices for scanty and unappetizing meals. Misery was written on every countenance; and the very first words I heard brought vividly to my attention the tremendous gulf which yawns between conditions in Germany, and in German Austria. Transportation was as bad as all the rest. A night passenger train runs three times a week from Salzburg to Vienna; instead of six hours, it takes fourteen hours to make the journey. It was unheated and in complete darkness the whole night long. The compartments were so crowded that it was literally impossible to get up and sit down. The nervousness and irritability of the men I met was itself a reflection of the universal distress. Every word spoken was bitter and rebellious.

BALTIC ELECTIONS

PARTY conditions are so chaotic in the newly formed Baltic States that the elections there are an uncertain guide to popular sentiment; but they suggest that the farmers are coming forward in politics. In Lithuania the new constituent assembly of ninety-nine members contains fifty-nine Christian Democrats and twenty-nine Democratic Peoples' Socialists. In

Lettland, the constituent assembly numbers one hundred and fifty. Ninety-three seats are held by the bourgeois parties and fifty-seven by the Social Democrats. The principal bourgeois group consists of the agrarian parties, who hold fifty-five seats. In Esthonia the Social Democrats are the strongest single party, holding forty-one out of one hundred and twenty seats in the constituent assembly. The Liberals and the Labor party, who act together, control fifty-five votes. There are only eight Radical Socialist and seven Conservative members.

MEXICO AND GERMANY

MEXICO's recent difficulties have received much attention in the German press, whose comments disclose the fact that the Carranza government has been conducting a publicity and propaganda campaign in that country. A German-Mexican society was formed about two years ago, with a separate branch in Berlin. Last May it began to exhibit to the public of that city films representing Mexican scenery, industries, and opportunities. This exhibition was accompanied by lectures intended to show that Mexico has attained a high level of civilization, that it has a modern school-system, and that it is encouraging industrial development. Among other things shown by these films are airplanes built in Mexico, large cotton mills, sugar plantations, paper factories, and the like. The general purpose seems to be to encourage German immigration to that country.

THE LEAGUE AND POLAND

FRIENDS of the League of Nations in Great Britain are attacking Lloyd George and the Supreme Council for usurping the functions of the League

and condemning it permanently to a condition of innocuous desuetude. Commenting upon the failure of the League to prevent the present war between Poland and Russia, the *London Nation* says:

Surprising as it may seem, there were people who did believe in this League of Nations (we include ourselves among them) with a passionate faith. Even when its functions were narrowed and its constitution misshaped in the Covenant, we were simple enough to think that it would at least serve as a safeguard against future wars. The first serious test has come and it is found wanting. . . . If the League were to take up this matter, we should place no great faith in the impartiality of the present Council in a dispute between any nominal ally and the Soviet Republic, nor should we stake much on the probability that Poland would sound the 'cease fire,' if by a miracle the League were to bid her to do so. Nor has this pitiable League the moral authority to make its award respected. None the less . . . the League ought to have intervened in this dispute.

SUGAR

EVEN last autumn sugar was selling for fifty cents a pound in Japan, and the Formosa plantations were declaring dividends of thirty per cent. At that time American consumers were getting sugar for a lower price than those of almost any country. Late in May the retail price in Great Britain was about twenty-eight cents a pound. A large sugar merchant of that country predicts in the *London Times* that the United States will attract sugar to its markets from all parts of the world. 'There seems to be no limit to the price America is willing to give, and the result is that she is not only getting Cuban supplies but large quantities from our colonies and other countries. If she wants sugar she can get it at the high price she is prepared to pay, which means that the rest of the world must do without it.'

[*Frankfurter Zeitung* (Radical Liberal Daily), May 16]

THE AMERICANS

BY ERWIN ROSEN-CARLÉ

UPON a little island in the propeller-churned waters of New York harbor stands a gigantic statue. The island is known as Liberty Island, and the statue represents the Goddess of Liberty. It is an immense female figure, the head encircled by a crown of victory, the right hand lifting a torch proudly toward heaven. In the background tower the lofty façades of the great city. Over the waters sound the incessant clamor of bells and whistles, and the muffled rumble of the mighty movement of American life.

The monumental figure stands composed and silent. It is not remarkable as a work of art. It is a poster in bronze. But every American, whether man or woman, child or youth, who passes it on an ocean liner or a ferry-boat, raises his head higher and feels his pulse beat quicker as he regards it.

This mammoth monument of bronze preaches the creed of the American nation: that America is the Land of Liberty. 'America is the most beautiful, the greatest, and the best country in the world.'

At night electric lights outline the crown of victory, and the white beam from the torch shines far into the distant darkness. Beyond is the humming city, from which pours forth a chaotic flood of brilliance, outlining in stars, lines, and circles the remarkable profile of New York. The deluge of light which enwraps the Goddess of Liberty breaks into a multitude of beams, which lose themselves in the distance beyond. Brightest of all is ever the ray from the torch of freedom in her uplifted hand. It is all grandiose, gigantic—something no other nation possesses.

And that brilliant, flashing beam, which thrusts its way straight into the heart of the unbounded west, like a piercing message, is a ray of America's thought.

For through all the grotesque contrasts, the meaningless contradictions, and ugliness of this new country, there flashes one imperative all-uniting message. No nation came into the world under greater difficulties. The confusion of tongues at Babel was a trifle compared with the confusion of tongues in America. In the city of New York alone practically every language of the civilized world is spoken. There are streets in that city where the common speech differs as much from that of the neighboring street as if half the circumference of the globe lay between them. America's military marches, so characteristic of the country, were composed by a talented Russian Jew. The greatest theatre-owner in the United States is a Pole. The largest newspaper publisher is a Galician. Italians control the fruit trade of the city. More than three fourths of the policemen are Irish. In parts of the city of New Orleans the only language is French. Great regions of the prairie states are settled by Norwegians. There are so many Germans in the

country that five cities bear the name of Bismarck. In the Black Belt of the South are negro communities which still practise voodoo worship. Yiddish writings are read to the factory girls while they work in the great clothing shops of Chicago. Among the famous men in American public life there is hardly one who cannot trace his ancestry within two or three generations to England, Germany, or some other foreign land. It is one of the greatest miracles in the evolution of nations that from this chaos of peoples and races a united nation of marked individual character and sentiment should arise. It is the message of America that has wrought this miracle.

'Americans are free.'

'Every American is the architect of his own fortunes.'

'America is the greatest, fairest, best land in the world—the land of largest opportunity.'

'The greatest blessing granted to man is to be an American.'

'America is God's country.'

If the success of this American creed, with its posteresque aggressiveness and self-assertion, had not been so obvious and indisputable in achieving real results, we might be tempted to recall the old saying that the loudest shouters get the most attention. For the Americans have always advertised this American creed in their own country and elsewhere with unexampled insistence and vociferousness. They have always sung the same anthem. They have advertised their unbounded resources, their unexampled opportunities. We all recall the naïve boasting of our American friends—but we no longer smile at it as we did formerly.

'I'm an American and I'm damned glad of it. It's the finest country in the world. In my country the President has not a particle more rights

than a hack-driver. We have got more money than all Europe put together. We raise more hogs and better hogs than all the rest of the world besides. If we once start fighting we'll smash all you people over there. Our morals are higher than those of other nations. Our piety is real piety. Our veracity is simon-pure veracity. Our honor is the most sensitive of honors. Our daughters are the most beautiful and virtuous, our wives are the fairest, our men are the salt of the earth; for we are Americans and we are damned proud of it. This is God's country.'

Does n't that sound comical? None the less, these alleged truths contain sufficient basis of substantial fact to make a working programme. They have been dinned into the ears of the people every day and hour. Orators proclaim them from public platforms. Clergymen preach them from the pulpit. Newspapers headline them; schools teach them; they are the accepted beliefs of the best society; they are the ever-fresh theme of statesmen. America's pride in itself is a leaven which binds its diverse elements together. It has been a great success. Praise has always been the best incentive to labor. Nations, like individuals, find praise, even self-praise, heartening. Pride, vanity, a powerful self-consciousness, devotion to success, have thus been moulded into the American character and have become part of the people's soul. There stands the American nation—a living fact! The beam of light which flashes out across the western continent from the Statue of Liberty does indeed bind the people into one.

'I am an American. I am proud of it. America is God's country.'

Nothing succeeds like success. The American who boasts of his Americanism and of his God's country, on every fitting and unfitting occasion, is not a

man to be laughed at for that reason. His national faith, which has the good qualities of the faith which moves mountains, is only to be admired; for it is an honest faith. It is the product of his character, of the vital energy with which the most enterprising of all countries has inspired its people. The land is young. The fathers, or at the utmost the grandfathers, of the present generation have carved their homes out of the virgin wilderness. This requires self-reliance and always self-reliance—self-reliance and self-confidence to an unexampled degree. The men who mastered this task had no time to weigh, and ponder, and criticize, and to busy themselves with their own weaknesses and defects. They had to be strong, to believe in themselves, and to measure their strength against even the impossible. These ancestors of the Americans of to-day engraved on the hearts of their descendants such mottoes as these:

'Where there's a will there's a way.'

'Believe in yourself and others will believe in you.'

'God helps those who help themselves.'

The sons of these pioneers erected buildings forty stories high, raised cities out of the virgin prairie in a single night, heaped up gold as with a magic wand, simply for the joy of accomplishment. They devised a system whereby a single man could slaughter thousands of hogs in a day. They built railways through apparently impassable wilds. They were habitual dyspeptics because they would not take the time properly to nourish their own bodies. They hurried, ever hurried, and made it an article of their creed that a man's honor was measured by his usefulness.

They did not make a god of gold.

Nothing is more false than to speak

of the United States as the land of dollars and its people as dollar-chasers. They made a god of doing things. Gold was only a pleasant incident. Doing things was what really counted. It was as if its new dwellers breathed in with the very air of the land where they lived the two watchwords of faith which America demands of every citizen, self-confidence and service.

A man must have faith in himself, and he must be of use in the world. Americans regard these as the first moral commandments. Out of this conception of individual duty has evolved national pride and a sentiment of national unity. The American nation was born the moment that the American ideal of manhood took definite shape. The American nation became a nation by the spontaneous action of men holding the same ideal. It was not the creation of a great general or of a great civil leader. Americans stand or fall, both as individuals and as citizens, with their self-reliance, and their faith in labor and achievement. This makes the evolution of the Americans into a single people unique. They are a spontaneous creation, a direct product of nature. First there was the man, then came the nation.

'I'm an American, and I'm damned proud of it.' These challenging, unceremonious words — Americans have shouted them a million times into the ears of their European friends — constitute the key to the American character. If I wish to understand, to judge, to comprehend the Americans, I must keep these words constantly before my mind. I must realize how powerful and direct their meaning is. I must consider them with respect. Their defiant assurance is itself an exultant affirmation of their truth. The history of most individuals — like the history of nations — consists large-

ly of disappointments, failures, crushed hopes, and shattered plans; and the man, or the nation, who defies misfortune and maintains his pride and self-confidence and reliance intact rises above mere personal egotism. Only the positive will is creative, and though it may manifest itself in what seem grotesque forms, it is none the less the true inspiration of attainment. Faith can move mountains.

It is easy, perhaps, to prove that the American creed betrays many inconsistencies, overlooks many evil conditions, diverges at many points from the truth. Undoubtedly God's country has its self-contradictions. In the mines of Pennsylvania, children work under conditions which inevitably condemn them to an early death. A man past forty is usually reckoned unemployable, because his efficiency is questioned. The Taylor system has worked out with uncanny scientific precision methods for extracting the utmost possible service from the worker. For instance, a stoker is shown by complicated and mysterious electrical devices how to shovel coal with the least effort, how to reduce his motions to the most economical mechanical simplicity. He can thus multiply his service by ten. When the Taylor system has taught him this, his pay is doubled — for tenfold service — and yet he is simple enough to rejoice over his increased earnings.

Men are ostensibly free in America. The people of that country rule themselves. Yet every child in New York or San Francisco or Chicago knows that in the past the results of the elections have often been determined by corrupt saloon keepers, who have controlled with whiskey and money enough votes to decide the outcome. Americans are fond of saying that in God's country any man willing to work can have three square meals a day, but they

are perfectly aware that in the sweatshops of Chicago poor girls are pitifully underpaid. They know that these people are actually under-nourished, as well as they know that there is a fearful overcrowding in the tenements of the great cities, and that in them, during the hot months of summer, infant mortality reaches an appalling height.

The American insists proudly that in God's country there is no oppression and there are no autocrats. But he will acknowledge with a smile and perhaps a grimace that the policeman on his beat levies regular toll in kind from the fruit carts of the Italian peddlers. The Italian accepts this with a placating smile, though he may feel murder in his heart; because he knows the officer has it in his power to put him out of business. The American feels a sense of outrage at seeing German women working side by side with their husbands in the fields, and regards this as mistreating the gentler sex. But he insists upon a tremendous amount of work from his stenographer, and physical breakdowns from overwork are common among women employees in every American city. He considers all men equal and free, but he qualifies this for the negro.

So consistency is not a jewel more common in God's country than elsewhere.

But none the less it would be a great mistake to charge the Americans with being either fools or hypocrites, as we Germans are all too prone to do. Before the war, and most unfortunately during the war, our people were fond of thus stigmatizing Americans. We refused to see the light among the shadows, and we painted the shadows far too black.

In reality this American is a man of great simplicity and candor. He thinks in such simple terms, and he

responds so impulsively and wholeheartedly to the suggestions of his intellectual environment, that we, with our over-refinement of thought, our hypercritical mental attitudes, and our stupid awe for what is foreign, are utterly unable to comprehend his wholesome egotistical naïveté. Every American, for example, assumed as a matter of course that President Wilson, first, last, and all the time, kept American interests permanently in view,—commercial interests first of all, for business is business,—and that the barbarians over in Europe were of secondary consideration. On the other hand, we regarded the man as a Messiah. We looked upon the Fourteen Points as a new Decalogue from heaven, because we did not understand the Americans. We were obstinately blind to the good counsel we received from the land of dollars and unbounded opportunities, and from its captains of industry.

An American thinks this way: 'If I am to accomplish anything, it goes without saying that I must have complete confidence in myself. That is self-evident. Since I am an American, it follows necessarily that I must cherish the same self-confidence and esteem for my fellow Americans and my country! I would be a big fool to point out to a business friend visiting my factory some defect which troubled me yesterday. I would be just as big a fool to wear myself out worrying over evils that undoubtedly exist in my country. That country is and shall always be, in my eyes, God's country. For in the first place, I am dead sure that there are worse evils in other countries, and in the second place, I am also dead sure that my children and grandchildren will manage to abolish these evils. I'm an American and I'm damned proud of it.'

This way of viewing things is in-

finitely naïve. A characteristic American proverb is 'Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost.'

The American looks out for number one. Number one of course is himself. His own interests come first, and he knows how to look out for whoever serves his interests. Our older European nations use precisely the same philosophy. But they disguise and adorn it with many meretricious trimmings. The American is no hypocrite, such as he often seems to be to us. What looks like hypocrisy in our eyes is in his mind a self-evident form of procedure. This becomes obvious when we consider that the American honestly believes that those things are really good and beautiful which serve his own interests. That is the faith he needs; that is his normal point of view. For instance, when he invents a new can-opener, he is not thinking merely of money, profits, business, but his mind leaps forward beyond these things, and he conceives the invention of his can-opener as a useful service to humanity. He sees the overworked housewife relieved of a fraction of her labors, and saved now and then from a torn and bleeding finger. Here his conviction is absolute. He must have that faith. It is essential for him because it enables him to interpret what he does for number one as a real service to all his fellow men, and thereby establishes his conscious conviction of his own worth. That is true Americanism. That fact throws a blaze of light on the whole history of the nation.

'We are the salt of the earth! America is the fairest, greatest, and best country in the world!' This is a poster, an advertisement, a positive assertion.

But the American people have demonstrated that both the individual and the nation, by their irresistible will-power, their unbounded self-confidence,

their undauntable industry, their self-reliance pushed almost to the grotesque, can achieve results which border on the miraculous. The American people have proved that in the final result it is will-power which wins.

[*The Manchester Guardian* (Liberal Daily),
May 20]

POLAND'S WAR

THE most serious factor in the appalling economic situation of Eastern Europe is the Polish-Russian war. It seems daily more probable that this war will be continued by Poland against the openly expressed advice of England. Economically we are the most stable power in Europe. To us, in Europe, other powers must look for help either directly or indirectly. Our wishes have behind them a force more compelling than bayonets. The advice we gave was good, demanded the risking of no treasure, the loss of no lives.

Yet the opposite policy, that of the small circle of Polish Catholic patriots and of France, herself not in a position to bear the costs of the result, has carried the day. Peace negotiations have been broken off on the flimsiest pretext, the Russians offering to negotiate in Esthonia, Warsaw, Moscow, Petrograd, or any neutral country, not excluding London or Paris, and the Poles refusing to negotiate anywhere except in the little town of Borisov, close behind the front, and making that impossible for military reasons by refusing to agree to a general armistice during negotiations.

It is true that the small groups who desired the success of the warlike policy have been unscrupulous in the means they used to attain their end. Ridiculous rumors were, for example, very effectively circulated from Warsaw and Paris, to the effect that Esthonia had turned Bolshevik after her honorable

and entirely satisfactory peace with Russia. The object of these rumors was, of course, to prove that it was unsafe for any country, and so unsafe for Poland, to make peace with Russia. A steady campaign has gone on all this year to produce the impression in the newspapers that Russia was attacking Poland. Russia, it seemed, was still attacking when the Poles, nearly 300 miles beyond their frontiers, took Dvinsk in the north and advanced to Mozyr in the south.

The Poles have justified their steady advance into foreign territory by claims which cause most indignant surprise among the peoples concerned. Briefly, the Poles declare that they consider that they have a right to the frontiers which were theirs in 1772. It is a claim to a population of nearly 30,000,000 souls — that is to say, to a population nearly three times as large as the population of Poland itself at the beginning of the war. It includes, incidentally, Lithuania, White Russia, the bulk of Latvia, and stretches far into the Ukraine. The claims of Germany on France, of France on Germany, of Italy on Austria, and of Roumania on both her big neighbors are almost insignificant beside this Gargantuan appetite.

Nor is it as if any considerable proportion of the population within these frontiers were Polish. The following governments of the old Russian Empire are those concerned: Livland, Kurland, Kovno, Vilna, Grodno, Suwalki, Vitebsk, Minsk, Mogilev, Kholm, Volynsk, Kieff, Podolsk. Of these Poland has an ethnographical right to Kholm alone. In not one single example of the remaining governments do the Poles number even 25 per cent. The population of these nine governments in 1909 was 22,604,222 persons, and in 1916, 27,196,400. In 1911, of this population 73.42 per cent were

Russians, White, Great, or Little, 4.67 per cent were Poles, 13.43 per cent were Jews, and 8.48 per cent belonged to other races.

The Poles, however, may be basing their claim on something other than population, although that is the principle to which most civilized nations refer such disputes. If they base their claim on landed property and not on population, the Poles have a slightly better case, though, even so, a very weak one, especially against a revolutionary country where great landowning has come to an end. Up to the close of the first half of the nineteenth century the great landowners of the governments of Vitebsk, Mogilev, Minsk, Volynsk, Kieff, and Podolsk were almost exclusively Polish. The great Polish landowners began selling their estates when the emancipation of the peasants deprived them of their serfs. In 1900 they still held about half their old properties.

But we are now in 1920, and during the early years of the twentieth century the Poles continued getting rid of their estates. On January 1, 1909, just over 23 per cent of the estates in these governments were Polish. In Vitebsk government 27.8 per cent, in Minsk 34.4 per cent, in Mogilev 19.3 per cent, in Kieff 15.5 per cent, in Podolsk 21 per cent, and in Volynsk 20 per cent. These percentages continued to fall until the outbreak of war in 1914.

Perhaps, recognizing the frailty of their rights alike on the basis of property and on the basis of population, the Poles may found their claims on some new principle, or on the very old one that anyone has a right to what he can get, no matter how. Naturally, they will not immediately claim all these provinces for themselves. The poorer provinces of the north will pass perhaps nominally into protectorate states under Polish patronage. White

Russia and Lithuania have been named as states in which in this way Poland will take a friendly interest.

But the Lithuanians, who alone have had a chance of being publicly heard on the subject, used the Helsingfors Conference chiefly as a tribune from which to expose Polish tactics and to protest against Polish encroachments. It is said that they even went so far as to propose an alliance of the other border states for mutual defense against Polish Imperialism. The assistance of the border states will hardly serve Poland as an excuse. She may claim to be reaching out the hand of civilization to save these provinces from the economic ruin of Russia. One would ask, remembering Mr. Brailsford's graphic picture of what he saw in Poland, whether they intend to raise them to the same condition as that of their own ruined country. That could hardly be justified as being in the interests of the unfortunate peoples concerned. Such salvation of the rich provinces of the southwest is rather too much like the salvation of a millionaire by a sturdy beggar, who may indeed help him to acquire merit by assisting him to give to the poor.

All this, besides much else, must have been in the minds of English statesmen when they advised Poland to make peace, not war, and told her that, whereas they would assist Poland if she were attacked by Russia, they would not assist her in aggression. Aggression by Russia against Poland has long been impossible, since Polish troops along their whole front are hundreds of miles from Polish territory, and it will be remembered that Russia, in her desire for peace, actually proposed a line approximate to that held by the Polish invading troops as a basis for discussion, and stated that unless the Poles continued their advance she would not allow her troops

to cross it. Poland has seen fit to reject Russia's offer and England's advice, and apparently is determined, like a ruined gamester, to risk other people's money on a desperate gamble.

And what of the result? Whatever is the final outcome of this war, one thing is certain, and that is that it will be bitterly fought. The Poles cannot count on a quick conclusion, and they cannot face a conclusion long delayed. They have the better-equipped army, but they will be fighting in a country where they have united against themselves the old race hatred and the desperation of peasants resisting the return of their former landlords. The Poles will mass more artillery on the front, but they will have to face more opposition in the rear.

The struggle will be neither short nor easy, even if at first, as the Russians expect, it may go temporarily in Poland's favor. For at least a year, if not more, the economic restoration of Eastern Europe is postponed, a new war supervening to complete the havoc of Armageddon. The war will be fought between two peoples on each of whom falls a proportion of the Russian foreign debt. It will lessen the ability of both peoples to pay their shares. Finally, it will increase to ignition point the frictions already existing in Poland. The little country to which nobody wished anything but good may pay for its imitation of the madness and immorality of Versailles by a collapse at home which in a single week would nullify the whole of its expansion abroad.

In Soviet Russia the evolution of Bolshevism into something else will be postponed, and the war may well be the starting-point of Bolshevism in Poland. In any case, it is one more useless round, one more unnecessary fandango in that dance of death which is bringing civilization in Eastern Europe

daily nearer to the abyss. The victory of Poland or of Russia would do nothing to relieve the economic crisis in either country, and the fact of their being at war steadily accentuates the crisis in both. *Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat*. One would have thought that Europe was as tired of illustrating that aphorism as correspondents are of quoting it.

[*Vossische Zeitung* (Berlin Pro-French Democratic Daily), April 24]

FRANCO-GERMAN TRADE

BY ALEXANDER REDLICH

A HIGH French official, with whom I had a long conversation yesterday, considered the restoration of confidence between Germany and France the most important preliminary to the resumption of profitable intercourse between the two countries. The impressions which I have gathered in Paris convince me that such a restoration of mutual confidence is possible, but it can be brought about only by a frank interchange of views, not alone between our governments, but also between our people at large. Germany must find out what France thinks, what France expects from the German people, what attitude that nation desires to take toward our country, and what, in its opinion, has hitherto stood in the way of closer relations. It will be the task of the present article to contribute to this understanding. It is based entirely upon the views of the French official whom I have just mentioned, who occupies an influential post in the Foreign Office, and will have much to say regarding the policy which his government will follow in respect to the subjects we discussed. He stated at the very beginning of our interview that his views represented those of the Prime Minister, and that they corresponded with the general

programme of the Foreign Office. In summary they were as follows.

Germany and France are mutually dependent on each other. They cannot continue indefinitely in the hostile attitude they maintain at present, and a resumption of friendly relations between them must follow, as it has after all great wars, in the wake of commerce. The French government has resolved upon, and has instructed its Berlin representatives to prepare for, an economic agreement with Germany on the broadest possible basis. The measures already under discussion in the French Cabinet, for carrying out the economic provisions of the Peace Treaty, doubtless have this ulterior object also in view. It was with the same purpose in mind that the negotiations for regulating exports and imports between Germany and France were begun, which have been interrupted, for the time being, by the Ruhr incident. However, the French government does not wish to limit its arrangements to providing for the exchange of specific commodities between Germany and France. The French government wishes to come to an understanding with its Eastern neighbor concerning the whole question of restoring its ruined territories. It furthermore intends to propose a general traffic agreement between the French and the German railways.

In respect to imports from Germany to France, there is great complaint over the attitude of German officials and manufacturers. French customers are becoming convinced that the Germans do not wish to trade with them, and that they prefer to send their goods to any other market rather than to France. The arbitrary treatment of foreign customers which now characterizes German trade authorities is, in the opinion of the French, due directly to government influence. Germany's

control of its export trade is in the hands of a hierarchy of officials and commissioners who perform their duties without regard to any recognizable system of law and procedure. Contracts for goods between French customers and German producers are annulled by arbitrary government decrees preventing their exportation, although manufactures of the same kind are exported freely to Switzerland, Holland, or England. As a result, French merchants do not know where they stand. Inquiries pour into the government as to whether it is permitted and possible to trade with Germany. The French officials are encouraging and promoting the efforts of the Germans to sell in France as much as they can; but if they are to continue such efforts, they must know with what authorities they have to deal in Germany, and who is in a position to make promises which will be binding and carried out, and which will not be arbitrarily canceled by some political superior. It is essential to be able to tell a French merchant or manufacturer what goods he will actually receive from Germany on a specific date. In the opinion of my French informant it would be better to have such commercial dealings handled directly between the commercial organizations of the two countries, without passing through the hands of the government at all. France has laid the foundation for such a commercial body in its *Comptoir d'Achat*. This is a purchasing society for the devastated territories, promoted by the government, but independent of it. A property owner in those territories may — although this is not compulsory — make his purchases through the *Comptoir d'Achat*. It is admitted that this society could be improved. A plan for amending it is now being considered. Trade would

be greatly facilitated for Germany, were it to organize either one, or several supply companies, to embrace those branches of manufacture and trade which desire to make deliveries in France.

Similar machinery should be provided for handling French exports to Germany. The character of this trade is suggested by the general situation in both countries. Since German exchange is under that of France, German wages are correspondingly lower. Therefore, it will be to the advantage of France to ship raw materials produced within its territories, or easily obtained from abroad, to Germany, and to take German manufactures in return. France can have part of its iron ore smelted in Germany, and part of its wool manufactured there. Negotiations between industrialists in both countries for such an exchange of products are already under way, with the cordial support of the French government.

Complaints have appeared in the semi-official newspapers of Germany that France is trying to sell that country things which it does not need, and that its merchants show utter ignorance of the actual business condition in Germany. That, according to this official, is unfair and inaccurate. France knows very well what the real facts about Germany are, for with minor variations they are the same as in France itself. Both countries need the same kind of goods. Both must have foreign grain, meat, wool, and cotton. Both must buy these commodities in the same markets — namely, England and America. They must pay the same prices, and in almost equally depreciated currency. These common conditions give the two countries common interests. They live, so to speak, under the same roof, and they must help each other instead of

weakening their strength by mutual controversies.

This turned the course of our conversation to the possibility of doing something at the Brussels Finance Conference for the economic reconstruction of Germany. My informant summed up the French stand on this subject as follows:

'We can negotiate only on a basis of the provisions of the treaty. Our experience so far has made us believe that Germany is trying by every means in its power to evade fulfilling those conditions. Up to the present time Germany has made no serious efforts to comply with any one of its important obligations to the full extent of its power. We are in a position to estimate what Germany can do. For example, we made concessions in the matter of coal deliveries such as were demanded by conditions in Germany itself. The last time we did this was in postponing the April shipments. But even when we lightened these obligations Germany does not fulfill them. We have not received the mine timbers, which we have the right to demand under the treaty, for repairing our own mines. You Germans tell us that you cannot get such timbers at home, but we know that you are selling timber of the same kind to Switzerland. We demand under the treaty a resumption of through railway service. The German government tells us that a certain number of trains will be put on; but, in fact, only two of them are actually started. The omission of the others is excused on the ground of technical difficulties. I could multiply such instances indefinitely. In view of such an attitude on Germany's part, we must insist upon the exact fulfillment of the treaty. That treaty was not made by France alone. It would have been a very different treaty if

France had concluded it independently with Germany. But we have accepted it in the end, and Germany likewise has accepted it. We must observe it, and Germany too must observe it. But it would be much easier for both countries if Germany would produce serious evidences of its honest intentions of meeting us half way. If that could be done, our negotiations would promise the best results. We would then be quite ready to talk over all these subjects with the Germans in a friendly conference, and work out some way of carrying out the treaty in a friendly coöperative spirit.'

Hereupon, I remarked that a great many Germans believed that the recovery of normal business conditions in every country depended primarily upon aid from England, and that men frequently spoke of closer commercial relations with England or with France as alternatives of which the former was obviously to be preferred, because England is a richer and more highly developed industrial country. In reply to this my informant said:

'It would carry us too far afield to discuss this subject as fully as it deserves. I wish only to say that England is not in a situation where it can rescue Germany without securing for itself direct control of German works and factories. The Germans should bear in mind that England never bestows favors for nothing. The only country which possesses sufficient financial strength to undertake so immense a task is the United States. So far as I am informed, no disposition exists in that country to make heavy engagements in Europe. The Germans should also bear in mind that Europe is bound together by its common distress, and that its wisest policy is to work out its own salvation by its united efforts.'

[*L'Humanité* (French Official Socialist Daily), May 26]

FRENCH POLICY IN RUSSIA

BY RENÉ MARCHAND

Moscow, March 30. — The subsidized press of France, which has regularly had the honor to excel the press of every other country in its hateful attacks on the proletarian government of Russia, shows at last some signs of a dawning sense of reality.

For instance, when the official English wireless, in an effort to justify its refusal to resume diplomatic relations with the Soviet government, cited the alleged criminal propaganda conducted by Bolshevik envoys in Switzerland and London — propaganda which ostensibly had 'compelled' their expulsion from those countries — *L'Homme Libre* quite appropriately called attention to their having forgotten that Joffe had been expelled from Berlin by a clique of Imperialist Socialists, and showed up in excellent style the way the former ambassador of the Soviets had violated the treaty of Brest-Litovsk by taking active part in the revolutionary propaganda against William II. A second example occurred in *Le Temps* of January 24, undoubtedly inspired by the oversight of *L'Homme Libre* in referring to Joffe, when that prominent journal remarked that events in Russia usually belied every metaphor applied to them, whether it was 'steam roller' or 'barbed-wire palisade,' concluding with the sad observation: 'How can we assume that an army composed almost entirely of Russians and officered by Russians, and directed by a government firmly seated at Moscow, does not represent Russia?'

This is not precisely a Red army 'commanded by German officer adventurers,' and composed of lawless refugees, Austrians, Germans, Turks, Hungarians, and Chinamen, which the Paris press had hitherto kept before the eyes of its readers. That means some progress. So it looks as if we might expect our enemies, so far as their blind class-hatred permits, eventually to show at least a minimum of regard for truth and honesty. This possibility is increased by the fact that Paris, as well as Rome and London, is, willingly or unwillingly, being forced to consider resuming commercial relations with Russia. French capitalists, being brought face to face with their own ruin, are beginning to see that this may be a question of life and death for them. Consequently, whatever they may pretend, these gentlemen at last are contemplating a resumption of diplomatic relations with the Soviet government; for without that, commercial relations are inconceivable.

Perhaps, however, even this slight reversion toward reason is too much to expect. For it looks as though the French bourgeoisie still persisted in its mad hallucination of seeing everything red, and, to put it in its simplest form, in identifying Bolshevism with German Imperialism. Lenin and Ludendorff mean the same to them. Their old corroding hatred survives intact. I am not referring to the fantastic imaginings in *Le Matin*, concerning the alleged 'historical session of

January 25,' when the Soviet government is supposed to have decided to send peace proposals to Poland, in spite of the violent opposition of a group of 'German reactionaries'—who have such tremendous influence at Moscow (!!!).

That yarn, worthy of the pen of a humorist, is perhaps the masterpiece of such literature. From the first line to the last it does not contain a single statement which is true. One amusing detail is that none of the commissioners mentioned in the article actually holds the office or performs the duties ascribed to him.

Side by side with this amusing canard, which throws a comic light upon the quality of French 'information' about Russia, there are more serious comments in *Le Temps*, which sees, for example, in the heroic effort made by the government of workers and peasants in Russia to restore an industry ruined by three years of imperialist warfare and two years of still more frightful civil war, complicated by sabotage and conspiracies—a peculiar manifestation of Russian mentality. These efforts recall with singular distinctness, in this paper's opinion, the system of Frederick the Great, and are peculiarly adapted to serve the purposes of Ludendorff. Apparently that official journal is still obsessed by its vision of that 'group of German reactionaries' which, if it reigns here at all, certainly reigns most invisibly and most mysteriously.

But there are still better things. Since it is difficult, even with the best will in the world, to attack the diplomacy of the proletarian republic, which is the only truly public diplomacy in the world,—the only foreign policy absolutely frank and candid in its declarations and aims,—*Le Temps* tries to make capital of the loyal statements of Kopp to the German people,

in which he addresses the common citizens over the heads of Scheidemann and Noske, telling them what the Workers' and Peasants' government has constantly published for two years to all the nations of the earth: that Soviet Russia is the only nation that does not seek to exploit and oppress the common people of Germany. That paper constructs upon this fragile foundation a grandiose project for uniting Russia and Germany in an alliance which will menace the peace of the world. (So that peace exists?) Evidently this great organ of French capitalism is incapable of understanding that the Russian policy proclaimed by Kopp is merely another chapter in the policy begun by Gortchakoff, Isvolsky, and Sazonoff, concerning whose projects and combinations that paper has been called to meditate many times in the past. It is not surprising that in these days such speculations do not convince anyone. In order to lend them at least a shade of probability, *Le Temps* again recurs to the alleged rule of Pan-Germanism in Moscow.

In another issue we have the more plausible suggestion of a project to colonize Siberia systematically, suggested to the Soviet government by Berlin. From this hypothesis *Le Temps* reasons out by a process of irrefutable logic, in its issue of February 8, this thought-compelling formula, which it hurls at the head, not only of Lenin's government, but of our French Socialists: 'International interests, class interests, are made superior to national interests; the interests of all, and international interests, too often shelter German interests.'

In truth this is an excellent formula and I gladly use it with the following more precise definition: 'The interest of international capital, the interest of the bourgeoisie governing classes,

is made superior to the national interest of France; the interest of all, and the interest of international capital, too often shelter Pan-German interests and the militarist reactionary plans of the Prussian Junkers.'

Let me explain here, once and for all, that every effort has been made to represent Bolshevism as the tool of German Imperialism, because it was necessary at all costs to make it hateful in the eyes of the French masses. This was a low political manoeuvre, but a manoeuvre so crude and maladroit as to reveal the straits to which the French bourgeoisie is driven to bolster up its unstable authority.

And so, gentlemen war-profiteers, in attempting as you have done to malign Russian Bolshevism, you pretend to defend France against German Imperialism?

Very well, let me ask you these questions. In May, 1918, M. Noulens, French ambassador at Vologda, decided, on his own initiative and against the urgent advice of his French military advisers, who had seen the situation on the front and insisted up to the last moment in urging the speediest possible transfer of the Czecho-Slovaks to France, to hurl the Czecho-Slovaks against the first units of the Red army, in order to precipitate armed intervention against the Bolshevik government. These were the very units which the Soviet Republic was drilling to send to the assistance of the revolting peasants and workmen of the Ukraine, in their uprising against Skoropadsky and the German military dictatorship. These German militarists were at this time endeavoring at every cost to maintain Germany's control over the Ukraine, in order to secure the food-supplies indispensable if Imperial Germany was to make its last great effort against France and win the war! In whose interest did the French ambas-

sador conduct this manoeuvre? Was it in the interest of France or of German militarism?

When, late in August, 1918, I informed M. Grenard of my firm conviction, supported by definite evidence, that the Bolsheviks not only were not German agents, but that they were contributing more effectively by their propaganda to break down Prussian militarism than Kerensky had by his fruitless and bloody offensive, our consul general at Moscow answered me as follows:

'We must force a policy of intervention. Our interest in discrediting Bolshevism in the eyes of Western Europe is superior to every other interest.'

Whose cause was he serving then? Was it the cause of France or the cause of international capitalism against France?

When, upon quitting Vologda shortly before the Allies disembarked at Archangel, M. Noulens telegraphed to Moscow: 'You shall not engage under any circumstances in negotiations with the Bolshevik government in case it tries to deal with you'; and again, when our ex-ambassador scornfully, and actuated solely by class-hatred, refused his aid to the Soviet government when the latter was at the point of being compelled to surrender to German Imperialism at Brest-Litovsk, whose interests was he serving, the interests of France or those of French and German capital against France?

When the French government continued obstinately to support Denikin, even though it had definite proof that this general was in constant communication with reactionary military leaders in Germany, and was aiding their cause, and even though it was fully aware that Denikin was looking forward, in case he succeeded, to the

possibility of creating a formidable coalition of two neighboring military monarchies, which would inevitably be hostile to France, whose interest was the government really serving? Was it looking out primarily for France, or for reaction the world over, and first and foremost for Pan-German reaction, whose victory would mean infallibly, and perhaps in a few months, preparations for a new war against France itself?

Whose interest, moreover, was General Niessel defending, when after Judenich had been completely crushed in his attempt to capture Petrograd, he made one more effort to extort from the Estonian government leave to transport from East Prussia, by way, of the sea and Estonian territory, the volunteer corps commanded by Bermont? This project was defeated by the resolute refusal of the Estonian government. Whose interest was he serving when he aided by every means in his power this same Bermont to strengthen his forces with new recruits from German territories? General Niessel then had in his hands complete proof that Bermont was in open communication with Von der Goltz, and through that gentleman with Von Lüttwitz, Ludendorff, and Colonel Bauer; thus maintaining regular military connection with Berlin. The inter-Allied Council at its conference in Riga, August 26, approved employing Bermont, though it knew perfectly well that he was equipped, armed, and supported by Junker military reactionaries in Germany; and they did not finally decide to insist upon his withdrawing from Baltic territory until formal protests were made by the British military representative, who discovered that Bermont was acting under the direct orders of Denikin when he tried to occupy Lettland and Esthonia; and

that his purpose was to prevent a contingency which Denikin feared, namely, the seizure of the islands of Dogo and Oesel by England.

Knowing of all these things, the military representative of France, even after the defeat of Judenich, tried to utilize Bermont and to reopen the gates of the Baltic provinces to Prussian militarism, so as to provide him an opportunity to fortify and establish himself there, whence he would have been in a position to back up just such a military revolt as has recently occurred in Berlin. He did this at the very time when M. Noulens, our former ambassador, was using all his influence, under the pretext of the danger presented by German militarism, to persuade Poland to attack the Russian Soviet Republic!

I have presented here only a few significant facts selected from thousands of others. For it is the whole foreign policy of the representatives of France in Russia, and in the countries adjoining Russia, during every day of the last two years, which should be pilloried in public.

That policy has been constantly and uninterruptedly a series of manoeuvres directed against the vital interests of France itself. We need not worry as to the way history will deal with these acts. It will deal with them as it has already dealt with the infamous legend that Bolshevism is an agent of German Imperialism. But one page still remains to be written. That page will tell the story of how for more than two years we have worked systematically and industriously to sacrifice the interests of France to those of its governing class, which rather than renounce a single one of its privileges or a single sou of its war-profits, has lightheartedly and with tranquil conscience driven France into disastrous foreign adventures and catastrophes.

Thus striking with blind and ferocious class-hatred at the heart of the proletarian republic, thus trying by every device to stifle a proletarian revolution in Germany and restore there a militarist government of the very kind the French people fought to destroy forever, French capitalism is heaping on the shoulders of the nation new and crushing burdens. It is paving the way for new wars in Central Europe and the Far East and wherever it can reach its hands.

French capitalism has fought without pity the proletarian revolution in Russia, and will continue to fight without pity the proletarian revolution in Germany, knowing perfectly well that only the success of this revolution will guarantee France a definite and durable peace, and liberty of labor. It pursues this policy because it seeks first of all to stifle the cry of revolt and appeal for deliverance rising from the masses of French workers at home, and to rivet its rule upon them at any cost—even at the cost of France itself.

[*L'Action Française* (Jingo Royalist Daily),
May 20]

HOW MEN BECOME BOLSHEVIKI

BY JACQUES BAINVILLE

THREE or four Frenchmen have enlisted, together with Sadoul, in the service of the Soviet Republic. With one of these I was intimately acquainted. He is René Marchand, the former correspondent of *Le Figaro* in Petrograd, and to-day one of the directors of the Bolshevik propaganda service. It is reported that he drafts the proclamations issued to the Red army. That does not surprise me. This Knight of St. George has always been an enthusiastic Russian patriot, more Russian than the Russians themselves.

The revolutionary press of Paris pays much homage to René Marchand, the bourgeois converted to Bolshevism, who, like most converts, does not conceal his new faith. A French journalist, M. Albert Londres, who has managed to penetrate the Soviet realm, recently met him. They spent a whole night tramping the streets of Moscow together, and he has sent back such an exact portrait of my old acquaintance, that I feel as though I had listened to every word of their conversation. It was the same Marchand whom I knew under Nicholas II, who now disclosed his heart under the reign of Lenin. He is like a document which throws new light upon Bolshevism as a phenomenon distinctively Russian.

René Marchand is a man of good middle-class family. I believe his father was a judge at Cherbourg when Nicholas II landed at the Arsenal Docks, and was received there by President Félix Faure. Those were the days when we shouted 'Long live Russia!' and sang 'God save the Tsar!' way back in 1896. What ages ago it now seems! That day the enthusiastic and brilliant college student, René Marchand, received the inspiration that changed his life. Later he frequently met at Cherbourg the officers of the Russian navy, charming and very foreign gentlemen. He mingled with them; he commenced to learn their language. He was all enraptured with Russia, and dreamed of going there.

Ten years later, in 1916, I saw René Marchand, a complete Russian. This transformation had happened to several Frenchmen, some of whom he told me had even joined the Orthodox Church. I fancy that he also considered such a change of faith; and in order not to hurt his feelings, I did not tell him how tiresome I found the

Russian churches, with their bulbous towers and turrets, which met us on every corner and seemed to advertise the religion of a nation of onion worshippers. But René Marchand, with his attractive enthusiasm, swore that he would initiate me into Russia and make me love the country as he did. I saw more of its people and customs with him than with any other person. His zeal and his enthusiasm were inexhaustible. He would not let me remain in ignorance of a single detail of Russian life. He excused and palliated whatever I found disagreeable or repulsive. He made every effort to arouse in me the same love for the country which he felt himself. I still recall one night at the opera when Chaliapin sang in the opera *Life for the Tsar*. He had heard this musical drama a hundred times, but was as moved by it as if it were his first experience.

At that time René Marchand was anything but a Bolshevik. Possibly he was the only correspondent of a French newspaper, if not the only Frenchman living permanently in Russia, who was heart and soul a supporter of the Tsar. He was more Tsarist than many a Russian reactionary. I met men of the latter type who blamed Nicholas for being pro-Entente, or who accused him of too much liberalism. I remember well one old official who rose to his feet and swung his arms in the air with a gesture of despair, saying: 'His Majesty wants a Duma! A Duma, sir! Now we cannot understand it, but His Majesty wants one!'

But René Marchand never criticized the Tsar. He believed him right, as he believed everything in Russia right; he loved him as he loved Russia. One day, when we were dining at a fashionable restaurant, the subject of revolutions came up, and René Marchand in his uniform, wearing the

Cross of St. George on his breast, declared with a youthful vehemence which could not help but inspire sympathy that he was ready to die for 'His Majesty the Tsar.' Probably he is ready to die to-day for Lenin. I note that he now detests the Socialists who have not joined the Third International as passionately as he cursed the Nihilists and the Cadets four years ago.

I never saw another person who had the same *entrée* with the old régime. He knew everyone; he was admitted everywhere. Ministers and ex-ministers, the highest men in the Tsar's government, honored him with their special friendship. In the worst days of the Stürmer régime, when his Franco-Russian patriotism was wounded to the heart, Marchand still kept telling me: 'Nevertheless, this government of professional officials is not such a bad government.' And indeed, as experience has shown since, it was not the worst government that Russia and its allies could have. On that point at least we were agreed. Up to the revolution of March, 1917, we held together on this point, hoping still that the life of expiring Tsarism might be spared. We both defended it against the discredit into which it was falling with everyone, even in France. He used to send me memoranda to help me in this task.

Then came the révolution. I have received but one or two letters from René Marchand since then, and for a time I even asked myself if this charming enthusiast might not possibly have died, as he promised to do at that dinner at Petrograd, for 'His Majesty the Tsar.' But he did not die, and the wireless from Moscow told us later that he had become Bolshevik. I understand it well. He justifies Lenin as he justified even Rasputin, and everything else that was not agreeable

to see and hear in Russia. He fights valiantly against the enemies of the Soviet Republic, as he fought valiantly against the enemies of the Tsar. He is still a friend of the men in power; he still has *entrée* to the highest places.

Because I understand René Marchand, this Russianized Frenchman more Russian than the Russians themselves, I understand why Bolshevism survives in that country. It is not a land of level minds, but a country where only unbalanced enthusiasts really thrive. Holy Russia or Red Russia — there is no middle ground. René Marchand still loves his new fatherland. He will love it whatever guise it may assume. It is not Bolshevism that made this recruit; his heart was conquered earlier. That conquest goes back to 1896, when the officers of the Russian navy in their gorgeous uniforms arrived from a distant country with their mystical emperor — back in those days when we had just begun to listen to the evangel of Tolstoy.

[*Der Tag* (Berlin Conservative Daily),
May 14]

AMERICA HELPING BERLIN CHILDREN

BY F. M. BAUER

AN American proverb says: 'Every cloud has a silver lining.' Even the gloom that has now settled over Germany is relieved by evidences of human charity and brotherly aid from abroad. Those who have brought us these favors have thought it their first and most urgent task to come to the rescue of the poor children of our great cities, and in coöperation with a central committee of the German Red Cross they have selected a spot in the fairest part of the Harz Mountains as a place where these under-nourished and invalid little ones may recuperate.

Now these children, ranging from seven to fourteen years, have begun to send greeting cards to their American benefactors.

One little eight-year-old youngster summarizes the messages of hundreds of these missives from what the writers often style 'a foreign land' as follows: 'I thank you with all my heart for the good things you have done for me. We have splendid things to eat and drink.' The older children are naturally more explicit, and attempt to adorn their messages with fair phrases. One little maiden writes: 'I feel like hugging the whole world when I get up in the morning and see these beautiful mountains.' Little Max K—— remarks in a more matter-of-fact way: 'Nature is better here than in Berlin.'

The children are splendidly cared for in every respect, and are looked after by a carefully selected staff of attendants. In one *pension* 'Fraulein plays the guitar, and we sing.' A young lad writes about excursions to enlarge their knowledge of the world about them, and of the instructive talks their leaders give them upon nature subjects.

These little ones sometimes receive strange impressions because they are entirely unfamiliar with country life and incidents. Gertrude M—— writes: 'I had never seen a water-mill before, and the roar of the water frightened me'; while little Kurt had discovered some 'fine frogs' nests' in a pond. Another boy considers it remarkable that 'in Winda the villagers have piled their wood in front of their houses, because they have no back yards; the cliffs rise straight up right behind their houses.' Klara R—— considers a waterfall by a stone aqueduct very remarkable because 'it suddenly disappears and comes out of another side of the mountain.' However, for the most part the children write of more material things. 'Here

I have glorious soup of a kind they cannot get in Berlin,' writes Erika B——; and this expression keeps recurring: 'I keep getting fatter.' Bruno H—— writes that the food is 'so fine that I cannot describe it; dumplings, omelettes, and all kinds of good things to eat.' The effects of this are obvious. One statistical-minded lad writes: 'On the average we have all gained from four to five pounds.' Kurt F—— closes with the proud statement that in ten weeks he has gained eleven pounds.

The order of the day is simple and practical. 'At eight o'clock we have breakfast, consisting of a couple of rolls and a cup of coffee. About ten o'clock we get a plate of soup or broth. About noon, and again at four o'clock in the afternoon we have another cup of coffee and a couple of rolls. Then at seven o'clock they give us supper.' The children are taught to keep their persons and their quarters clean and tidy. 'We sweep our sleeping rooms and every two days we wash down the stairs.' Some of the children have other light tasks. One boy looks after feeding the cows; another is a stable-boy and gets up at half-past six, while the others do not rise until half-past eight. One boy helps in the bakery, and another at a mill.

'After our second breakfast we either play or make excursions.' What splendid games they speak about in their letters! 'We have formed two tribes,' writes Otto S——. 'One tribe is the Apaches, and the other the Delawares, and we play trappers and Indians.' Ernst W—— writes that the boys have made bows and arrows and 'are hunting big game.' Several write that they have built caves of pine boughs; and one party has erected a little fortress on the edge of a small lake and dug a moat around it.

When seven-year-old Elizabeth S—— is at home in Berlin she gets up at five o'clock every morning to distribute newspapers; 'for mother cannot climb so many stairs, and I being so little can climb easier. Also in the evenings I help the best I can so that we can all have supper together. I am resting splendidly here.' Elsie S—— has 'not so much time at home as I have here. There I must always be helping mother; for she sews coats for the returned soldiers. We sit and sew very late at night. Then I am so sleepy when I go to school in the morning.' What light into the misery of some homes these little children's missives throw! In spite of her hard labors, however, Elsie must have made good progress in school; for she writes in a beautiful hand, with correct orthography and grammar. As a rule the little correspondents do credit to the Berlin schools.

One letter should be mentioned because it indicates rather unusual talent. The little writer gives his impressions as follows: 'It is three and a half weeks since I arrived here safe and happy. I am happy indeed; for I have come to people whom I understand and who understand me. I am able to enjoy to the utmost the glories of the Harz Mountains. How wonderful is awakening nature! One can really see here the beautiful spring climbing up the heights. As nature awakes, so do the hearts and spirits of men who were bowed down with sorrow. One's soul rises freely above with the feathered songsters who soar to the azure blue heaven. They know that I feel almost one of them. I know that many others of us feel the same. Gratefully yours, George K——.'

A whole colony of budding poets has developed in Haselrode. No less than fourteen little maidens at that place are merrily trying to straddle Pegasus.

Naturally we cannot quote all their verses, but a few extracts may be in order. 'Here I eat and drink and never grieve, I laugh in the morning and sing at eve,' writes little Margarethe M—. She has no high opinion of her home apparently, for she says frankly: 'Berlin is a sad place for children.' Lotte K— rejoices without affectation in her red cheeks: '*Zu Haus war ich ein Blassgesicht, und das steht einem Madel nicht.*' Hildegard N— would appear to be an expensive person to board, for she writes: 'At table I do all I can, and eat as much as a great big man.' Hildegard H— closes as follows, expressing the sentiment of most of the children: '*Ich weiss, wem ich das danken muss: Amerika send ich den Gruss. Was Ihr in Liebe mir getan, mein Lebelang denk ich daran.*'

[*Vienna Arbeiter Zeitung* (Austrian Conservative Socialist Daily), May 21]

WHY THE MODERATES LOST IN GERMANY

BY HEINRICH STRÖBEL

GERMAN exchange has recently risen. The money of that country has now attained about one tenth of its former purchasing power relatively to the currency of Switzerland, England, and the United States. Inasmuch, however, as prices in the latter countries have doubled, tripled, and even quadrupled, Germany has to pay twenty, thirty, and forty times as much in its money for the goods it buys from those countries as it did before the war. Consequently, it is not strange that in spite of the mark having recently doubled in value in international markets, domestic prices in Germany have not fallen. Indeed, they have continued to rise without interruption, except for a very few

articles. Where this leads is pointed out clearly in the computations of Dr. Kuczynsky, director of the statistical office of Berlin-Schöneberg. According to this authority, the minimum expenditure required to support a single man in February, 1920, was 133 marks; it was 196 marks for a man and wife; and 250 marks for a family with two children. By April, 1920, the cost of living according to this minimum standard had risen respectively to 186 marks, 276 marks, and 366 marks. It costs at present 9700 marks a year to support a single man; 14,400 marks to support the humblest laborer and his wife, and 19,100 marks to support a family of four. When we contrast with this the fact that a street railway employee in Berlin is able to earn by constant labor only 825 marks to 875 marks a month, we begin to realize how inadequate the income of the mass of the laboring population is.

At a time when the proletariat and all classes living upon fixed incomes are suffering so keenly from an enormous rise in the cost of food and other necessities, practically all capitalists are receiving gigantic profits. This irrational enrichment is not confined to illegal traders and typical profiteers. Legitimate trade and manufacturing, particularly the so-called 'heavy industries' of iron, steel, and coal, are among the principal beneficiaries of this condition. The dividends declared by banks, corporations, and other enterprises, after writing off large sums for depreciations and reserves and having recourse to the other familiar methods of hiding profits, betray an enormous increase in their incomes. At the same time the prodigality of these profiteers has reached an unexampled scale.

Recently my eye fell by accident upon two neighboring advertisements

in a Berlin newspaper. One offered for sale a suite of Chinese furniture for the trifle of 160,000 marks; and the other offered a vineyard which could be shown to earn 1,000,000 marks annually.

What folly it is to imagine that these great fortunes and profits will be seriously affected by taxation! Not long ago a Berlin paper cited a leading financial authority to the effect that the widely heralded levy on property, originally intended to be 20 per cent, would not amount in reality to more than six per cent, on account of the inflation of values. According to the estimates of the new national Minister of Finance, the property tax, estimated by his predecessor, Erzberger, to yield 8,340,000,000 marks annually, will yield only 6,150,000,000. Consumption taxes, on the other hand, will yield not less than 10,100,000,000 marks, instead of the 6,900,000,000 originally estimated. This simply means that the propertyless classes, whose incomes are already inadequate to feed and clothe them, will have to submit to a tremendous fiscal burden, while capital, even in our 'democratic republic' and under a government controlled by majority Socialists, is handled with kid gloves.

Even the commercial editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt* in an article entitled 'Dictatorship of the Heavy Industries' ridicules the incomprehensible simplicity of the new national Minister of Finance, for saying in his inaugural address: 'The social effects of the war profits and property taxes will be to lessen materially the accumulations of capital in private hands.' This editor surmises that Mr. Hugo Stinnes will prove a striking example to the contrary; for that gentleman is adding new millions daily to the fortune he possessed before the war and subsequently multi-

plied by his enormous profits during the war itself.

Just now that gentleman is investing huge sums in new enterprises, and is invading fields quite foreign to his original business of mining and smelting. He is buying right and left shipyards, transportation lines, hotels, machine shops, automobile factories, pulp factories, paper mills, publishing houses, and newspapers. He is throwing his toils over ever larger areas of our industrial world. He is paying for these purchases with the uncounted millions which our anti-social, monopolistic industrial organization casts almost without the asking into his lap. 'Thus he not only fortifies and extends his industrial power, but he is able to suborn public opinion.' It is indeed true that the Stinnes Company is buying newspapers on every hand, in Berlin, in Munich, and all over the country. It is absorbing great advertising companies, government organs, even funny papers—anything that may serve to rivet the control of capitalism over the public mind. The Tyssen Company is imitating Stinnes, directing its attention mainly to the control of the clerical press.

But it is not solely the billions heaped up at home which help these industrial magnates to extend their conquests in all directions. Nearly every large German firm in the iron, steel, and coal business possessed large properties in Lorraine, Luxemburg, or the Saar district. After peace was signed they sold these enterprises, either voluntarily or under compulsion, to foreigners. They took their pay in foreign currency, mostly French, and converting this at our depreciated exchange into marks, they now have additional millions at their disposal. For instance, the Stumm Brothers received 60,000,000 francs, and another company 30,000,000 francs. The

Rombach Furnaces obtained 110,000-000 francs for the properties they surrendered, and with this money have become a tremendous power in the German mining and smelting field. As a consequence, since the revolution our people have been the victims of the worst aspects of Americanization, because the power of capital in this country has been tremendously strengthened and concentrated. Multi-millionaires are now able to exploit the people as never before, and have become the masters and corrupters of public life.

Vorwärts recently published a list of the subscriptions raised at a reactionary political meeting, showing that a few great manufacturers had given on this single occasion 657,000 marks. That is only a minute fraction of the sums which our great manufacturing and mining magnates have poured into the war-chests of the reactionary political parties. We know equally well that additional millions have come from the same source to support insurgent military agitation, volunteer corps, and other agencies of reaction.

Our conservative Socialist ministers have not made the slightest efforts to check this abnormal accumulation of capital, to oppose a dictatorship of great industrialists, or to prevent the Americanization of German political life. In spite of every warning they have credulously preserved their faith in 'the coöperation of labor and capital,' a policy which the enterprising masters of wealth have used to boost the prices of the essential materials used in production, coal, and iron, and this to ensure themselves excessive profits. Is it not evidence of economic madness that a ton of bituminous coal, which cost in December, 1914, 18.75 marks, and even in January, 1919, only 44.60 marks,

should have risen by January, 1920, to 117.70 marks, and by the following April to 227.70 marks? Is it strange that with this mad sky-rocketing of the price of coal equally wild increases followed in the cost of every manufactured product? For example, the building trades were paralyzed, and this has affected directly the welfare and cost of living of the working-people. For instance, iron rose in price from 77.50 marks a ton in July, 1914, to 2338.50 marks by the end of last April. Bars and other partly manufactured metals rose in proportion. To quote one more figure: a ton of cement cost 35 marks in 1914 and 400 marks in April, 1920. Indeed, the price of this commodity was even higher when it was bought through underground channels.

Such ruinous manipulation of prices, bringing disaster to the rank and file of the population, is not justified in the remotest degree by the rise of wages. The commercial editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, whom we have already quoted, indicates correctly the real causes of this scandalous profiteering in the following words: 'Up to the present the great industrialists have utilized with marvelous shrewdness the efforts which the new government has made to reorganize production along Socialist lines to promote their private interests. Their employees have been corrupted by their eagerness for higher wages to coöperate in a price policy which has resulted in a genuine dictatorship of great capital.' Only just before the parliamentary election did the government comprehend that such a situation could not continue, and try to substitute for this dictatorship of capital a better and more thoroughgoing effort at socialization. Measures were taken to recall and reorganize the Socialization Commission, which had been persuaded to

retire into obscurity about a year ago. It is now proposed that this commission take up its work again with larger authority than it possessed before. But after pursuing for eighteen months an economic policy which has saddled the country with the incubus of an unexampled tyranny of capital, it will now be doubly difficult to adopt seriously a new course.

[*Lokal Anzeiger* (Berlin Conservative Daily), March 9]

ROGUES' EXCHANGES

BY ERNST KLEIN

It is incredible but true. Illicit trading goes on in the very middle of the city in the bright light of day. I am not referring now to those little, dirty, ill-smelling eating houses in Grenadier Street, but to the best-known restaurants of Berlin. The business is quite public. It is not conducted behind locked doors. The proprietors of these places do not even trouble to draw curtains across their great show-windows. The passing public can see all that occurs. A person who so desires may enter, seat himself, and watch the whole performance. I've done that.

One of the great cafés in Friedrichstrasse becomes a rogues' exchange between 11 A.M. and 1 P.M. Even a stranger would recognize at once that something exceptional was a-doing. Automobiles and cabs are constantly driving up and leaving. We know that a man who takes an auto nowadays is in really urgent need of haste. The frequenters of this café are busy men.

If you enter about noon you will find every seat in the great establishment occupied. Hundreds and hundreds sit there drinking coffee and talking business. There is no loud

conversation, no gesturing. People sit and converse quietly, as if upon indifferent matters. But they are doing business. Of course, you catch occasional casual gossip, but none the less they are there strictly for business.

I have spent a few days in succession at this café. I sat around and drank coffee. I kept a sharp eye out for all that happened, and listened to all that I could overhear; but I am not much wiser than I was before.

At the regular Stock Exchange you hear and see things, even though, if you are as much a stranger to that kind of business as I am, you do not understand what is going on. There you find life, activity, excitement. Of course, you do not see the actual goods that are being bought and sold on the Stock Exchange; still, you are aware that men are buying and selling. But at this illicit traders' exchange you see nothing and hear nothing. The members sit and drink coffee. Yet they make a living at it, and to judge by the appearance of some of these gentlemen, the living is a very good one.

On one occasion I sat down close to a table that was fully occupied. A couple of shrewd old characters dominated the party, with a group of young men between them. The old chaps were jovial, good-natured, hearty men. The younger members of the party were dressed with that cheap elegance which before the war betokened customers of shops 'selling out under official license.' Naturally, even this clothing now costs them a small fortune. I sat near these gentlemen for more than an hour, but I heard nothing of importance. At a time when respectable men are hard at work, these people apparently idled in a café. How do they make their money? The reader will say at once, 'By illegal trade, you stupid.' Natur-

ally, I know that already. A mere glance at these people shows that they live without the law. Their faces are their passports from the under-world. But how do they smuggle? What do they smuggle?

That is the main point. Where do they get their money and their diamonds? Can it all be stolen? If all they do is to sit in a café from eleven until one, where in the name of Heaven do they get the goods which they smuggle? At the regular exchange I can buy shares of stock or bonds without knowing how they look or without having them in my actual possession. But in Friedrichstrasse I must have the physical goods to deliver. I must produce them for inspection. These illegal traders never buy a pig in a poke.

I strolled about the café and looked over the customers as sharply as I could without exciting suspicion. They formed a fairly representative mixed company in which no particular element stood out at first glance. Gradually, however, I was able to group them. For instance, there are a good many women at this exchange. They sit around and drink coffee and gossip the same as the men. I do not mean that gayer feminine element, which helps the illegal traders throw their money out the window. There are a few of that class, but there are a great many women who are almost shabbily clad, with shoes run down at the heels, carrying dilapidated handbags. I heard one of these whisper to her neighbor, 'If I say a thing, you can depend on it. Either I can bring it or not.' I do not know what doubts her male companion had cast upon her word, but she was really angry.

Are these women the persons who bring the goods? Is that why they carry those dilapidated handbags,

whose contents no one would suspect of being valuable? Possibly, but though I watched carefully, I never saw any diamonds coming out of them. Possibly the café is merely where people make known what they have to sell and what they want to buy. The actual purchase and delivery may occur where there is greater privacy. On one single occasion I saw a man handling a gold watch. Once or twice I caught men taking small packages of silk paper from their vest pockets and unrolling them. They showed the contents to their neighbors, then quickly wrapped them up again and thrust them in their pockets. Occasionally a couple of men would withdraw to the window opening into the light-well, and put their heads together over a mysterious parcel. They would look at the article with a lens and then separate. That was all.

A number of very young fellows frequent this place—some of them almost in rags and others very well dressed. There are young men who are evidently timid and unaccustomed to their surroundings, and others who have the assurance of old habitués. On a single occasion I noticed one of these youngsters step up to a table and motion to a gentleman seated at it, whereupon both withdrew to the window at the light-well. The boy took a little package from his pocket and the other examined it, shook his head, and handed it back; whereupon the boy promptly disappeared. His business associate returned to the table and bought a noon edition of a newspaper.

Now what do these youngsters do? Are they the scouts who run down the gold and precious stones in the places where they are concealed and hoarded? Is their business the same as that of the women? I don't know. That is something for the police to say.

I likewise visited a restaurant near Spandau Bridge. It is not by any means a first-class establishment, but an old, smoky den. No secrecy is observed there. Men bring their goods and traffic in them without concealment. It is an enterprising, busy sort of place. A visitor must have a ticket to be admitted. This entitles him to a glass of beer or a slice of buttered bread at the buffet. Otherwise, the proprietor would make no profit. He does not furnish his facilities for mere charity. Most of the visitors are too intent on their business to think of eating. I exchanged my admission ticket for a cheese sandwich. The barmaid looked at me disapprovingly. If all the people who came in exchanged their tickets for food and drink, the proprietor would make less profit.

His profits must be enormous. The place was packed with people. There was hardly room for the proverbial pin to drop. But in spite of all the jostling and toe-treading, everyone was good-humored. They were all old pals. A stranger coming in must buy or sell something, else he is speedily shown his place.

All kinds of goods are handled. In a corner, near the door and at the window looking out on the street, the diamond traders gather. They need the light for their business. Three or four men sit in a group, others keep coming up in quick succession. One hands the man a ring or a pendant. Goods are quickly inspected and appraised, and a price is offered. It is accepted or refused without parley. There is no haggling. Business is done at a stroke.

In the middle of the room are a couple of gentlemen with a pair of scales. They buy gold and silver watches and other articles containing precious metals. They have an official

license and handle with difficulty the flood of articles tendered to them. Watch after watch is laid on the table. Men back in the crowd that encircles them pass bracelets, gold and silver handbags, necklaces, watches, gold seals and similar articles over the heads of the others. It is a busy place; and here, likewise, business is done at a stroke. Goods pass from owner to owner in less time than an ordinary man would take to tell the hour by his watch.

On the outskirts of this group is a sort of curb market. A man is going around with three rings on his finger. 'Who wants to buy?' he shouts, exhibiting his not overclean wares. Another man has a watch with a double case. 'What's the price?'—'Six hundred marks.'—'That is a high price—what will you give for this one?' With this, the second speaker pulls a watch from his own pocket. 'What is your price?'—'Fifteen hundred?'—Each inspects the other's property. In five minutes the deal is concluded; each has the other's watch and each has made a profit.

You can buy multifarious articles to your heart's content. In a corner there is a pile of goods that you will not find anywhere else in the city—woolen cloth, matches, hose, and in an ante-room boots and shoes. You see men's furnishings in the lot, and embroidered plush curtains, both new and second-hand. One man is even hawking a pair of garden shears, for which he wants 25 marks.

Of course, I ought to feel a sense of moral outrage at all this. But in the first place, that is not my *forte*. In the second place, it is not my business. It is the affair of my friend the prosecuting attorney. He knows what the law is and shrugs his shoulders. He would reply to my complaints: 'Why should I trouble my officers? Suppose

I have these men arrested, and seize the goods that each one has in his possession. I should have to prove first of all where he got them. Since I could do that in scarcely any instance, I should have to return his wares. It is the same old story — I know the fellow's an illegal trader, but the very law protects him. You cannot prove his crime.'

[*Il Giornale D'Italia* (Rome Constitutional Liberal Daily), May 25]

AN IMPRESSION OF FIUME

BY GIUSEPPI GREGORACI

I HAVE long been very anxious to come here to Fiume. It seemed like my duty as a good Italian, and I am happy and contented now that I have arrived.

The person who travels here by land, as I did, coming from Venice, finds his mind prepared for a more exact estimate of the sentimental value of this territory blessed by nature and by its own beauty and fertility.

During the few days since I arrived, I have made the acquaintance of several local residents, patriotically devoted to their homes. I have witnessed the proud madness of the Arditi, alert in their task of defending what they have won for us; but first and foremost, I have tried to ascertain the sentiment of the common people, who prove themselves in a thousand ways thoroughly Italian at heart. So strong are their feelings on this point, that one receives the impression of being in a country whose destinies are settled once for all. This attitude is most inspiring for ourselves, and should surely weigh heavily with our government in its negotiations.

For the people of Fiume the city is

already Italian and never can be anything else. The city has given Italian names to its streets, and it is deeply interested in everything that occurs in what it considers its fatherland. Its soldiers are from our own army — and are, by natural selection, those most passionately devoted to their country. Otherwise, they would not have defied discipline in order to come here to fight another battle where our cause still seemed endangered. These soldiers, led by valiant officers, symbolize Italy. They live like brothers among the citizens, who, far from accusing them of the excesses with which they are slanderously charged, admire their discipline and good order.

Fiume has demonstrated its desire to be Italian in its system of government and of private law. It is particularly interesting for an attorney to study the judicial procedure and legislation. Justice is administered in the king's name as if this were unquestioned Italian territory. Judgments are delivered and sentences imposed in the name of His Majesty Victor Emmanuel III. It makes no difference that the Italian government has not deemed it fitting to grant the request of the National Council here, addressed to the President of the Court of Cassation in Rome, asking it to hear and appeal cases which it was not desired to send to the Supreme Court in Budapest. When this request failed, a local court was organized to deal with these cases. All the courts employ Italian law and procedure. How profoundly significant this is may be indicated, perhaps, when we recall that the Austrian code is still in force at Trieste, although for a year and a half the judges have issued their decisions in the name of Italy.

LIFE, LETTERS, AND THE ARTS

THE GUITRYS IN LONDON

WE learn from Messrs. Macmillan that a second impression of Mr. Festing Jones's *Life of Samuel Butler* will be shortly ready for publication. The book is undoubtedly one of the most interesting biographies published in our time. The second edition will contain portraits of Miss Savage and Alfred Cathie; those who, like ourselves, possess the first, will be glad to hear that they can obtain these additional portraits from the publishers.

THE great 'hit' of the London season has been the performances of the Guityrys. An interesting review of the art of this famous French family is to be seen in the *Observer*. We reprint the greater part of it.

'Once Guityry meant Lucien. To-day Guityry means Sacha. Most distinguished sons of distinguished fathers complain that they are handicapped by their ancestry. Lucien Guityry, who is in the opinion of many people the greatest French actor of his time, may well complain that he is handicapped by his too-brilliant progeny. Instead of the fame of the father overshadowing the fame of the son, the fame of the son overshadows the father's fame.

'Sacha Guityry is the *enfant gâté* of the French public. No playwright ever wrote with such apparent ease as he does. He gives one the impression of having dashed off a drama in a fit of exuberance. The effect is one of delightful spontaneity. He knows no laws. The Grecian rule of the unity of time, place, and action, is *vieux jeu* for him. He is absolutely untroubled by

theatrical conventions. It is precisely his waywardness which has won the public.

'Whether he expresses himself in prose or in verse, his pen seems to babble, sometimes inconsequentially, always with a naturalness which astonishes. Bernard Shaw, who had only a week in which to construct a play out of 'Cashel Byron,' pretended that he chose Shakespearean blank verse as his medium, because it was so much easier than prose. Undoubtedly French verse may be facile, and when Sacha Guityry chooses to use it, he does so without the smallest obvious effort. In prose, too, he often seems to be merely amusing himself.

'Although he may not be so rich in ideas as Shaw, there is much in his fluency, in his *esprit*, in his total disregard for the prejudices of the theatre, that recalls the British playwright—a younger, more cynical, Frenchified Shaw. Often he seems to be laughing at his audience, but his audience will accept anything from him. Perhaps it is a pity that so early in life he became the spoiled darling of the Boulevards. Magnificent as some of the scenes in such plays as *Béranger* and *Pasteur* are, they are somewhat loosely strung together.

'He seems now to have turned definitely toward the form of biographical play which he invented. He takes a great man, and, like a Landru of the theatre, cuts him up into *morceaux*. We have a series of tableaux, each of which is wonderfully effective, though the play as a whole is disconnected. It

would seem impossible, for example, to relate the history of Béranger from the cradle to the grave on the stage, but Sacha Guitry does so with incomparable skill. It is said that he has the intention of presenting in the same fashion episodes in the life of Napoleon. He is certainly capable of this audacity. Who but he would dream of reducing the crowded career of France's greatest hero to the three hours traffic of the stage? But he has adopted as his playwright's motto Danton's famous phrase: "*De l'audace, encore de l'audace, toujours de l'audace!*"

Sacha Guitry is thirty-five. He was a mere boy when he wrote his first play, but it is during the last eight years that he has captured the imagination of the French theatre-goers, and has succeeded to some extent in making the world forget that for nearly forty years Lucien Guitry has, by the most solid and remarkable qualities of interpretation, been regarded as second to none on the French stage. From the days of his association with Sarah Bernhardt, to his wonderful impersonation of Talleyrand, Lucien Guitry has gone from triumph to triumph. It is perhaps only necessary to recall that it was he who took the leading rôle in 1910 in Edmond Rostand's *Chantecler*, the most-talked-of play of our time, which was promised for seven years before it was actually presented at the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin.

'What is a young man who is conscious of his genius to do when he has a Lucien Guitry for father? Sacha Guitry decided that there was only one possible thing: that was to break away from parental control and to strike out for himself. Whether there was a quarrel or whether this step was purely a matter of policy, may not concern the public. It belongs to the private life of the Guitrys. But the public was intrigued by this separation and we were

regaled with all kinds of anecdotes, most of which were probably untrue. The young playwright, who is incidentally a fine actor, did not complain of this interest in his domestic affairs. It proved to be a capital advertisement. He worked in his own way, and that way led to success. It was a triple success—a success as actor (for he was quickly playing the leading part in his own plays), a success as author, and a success as journalist. He worked enormously and yet always preserved the air of a *flâneur*. His output was tremendous and his technique, in spite of his apparent rejection of technique, prodigious; and yet he affected an amusing dilettantism.

'It was not until he had shown that he could conquer Paris without the aid of his father that he rejoined his father. It is not material whether this irresistible combination of the most brilliant playwright and the actor with the best established reputation should be called a reconciliation or a business partnership: it was inevitable. Certainly he recognized that for interpretive skill his father was his superior. For the occasion he wrote one of his most sparkling plays, full of ingenuity and *esprit*, *Mon Père avait Raison*. The title itself is a masterpiece of audacious wit. For the public believed that he really meant to discuss the family affairs on the stage.

'If plays are to be produced *en famille*, it is necessary to marry the leading lady. Yvonne Printemps is the third member of this brilliant family; and the wife of Sacha Guitry, contrary to what may almost be regarded as the rule, is an actress of real talent. Paris follows the fortunes of the Guitry family—father, son, and son's wife—actor, playwright, and leading lady—with a perpetual interest in their private lives as well as in their public performances. The trio is its own

manager, in its own theatre, with its own plays, in which it is its own players.'

MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL has appeared in Philip Moeller's *Madame Sand*. The title rôle was played in America by Mrs. Fiske.

IN the gymnasium of University College a performance of Nicholas Udall's comedy, *Ralph Roister Doister*, was given in practical illustration of some lectures on early English comedy which Dr. F. S. Boas has been giving to some London teachers of English. In such a course of lectures *Ralph Roister Doister* must needs play an important part. It is the first extant English comedy; it is the first English play—earlier even than *Gorboduc*—which has an organic plot divided into acts and scenes; it gives the first example of the influence of Plautus and Terence on the early English comedy, yet betrays the author's desire to do more than imitate—to make an English play.

M. JEAN COCTEAU of Paris has recently tried an interesting experiment. He has tried to make the *décor* and action of a circus serve as a vehicle of artistic expression. The novelty was called *Le Bœuf sur le Toit*, or *The Nothing-Happens Bar*. The performance was thus reviewed by Arthur Johnson:

'Lastly came *Le Bœuf sur le Toit*, which the author describes as a "farce in the mediæval manner." There were no words but, throughout the entire performance, a continuous orchestral accompaniment. The scene was an American bar in which several persons were drinking whiskey. The actors all wore immense masks, or rather complete false heads of gigantic proportions,—which gave them an amus-

ingly top-heavy appearance,—and costumes of ingenious design. After a short pantomime, rendered entertaining by the grotesqueness of the figures, the arrival of a policeman was mutely announced, the whiskey bottle replaced by a milk jug and the tumblers by bowls. The policeman, who was extremely tall, entered, and was shortly after decapitated by an electric fan that hung down from the ceiling. An actor in woman's dress then mimicked a savage dance about his head. After the departure of the other characters, the barman succeeds in resuscitating the policeman's body by pouring gin down his neck. He then replaces his head on his shoulders and presents him with a fabulous bill.

'All of this sounds, and was, quite foolish and, as M. Cocteau himself warned us, altogether unimportant. Without describing it, however, it would be impossible to convey any idea of the spirit of the performance. Such action as there was served merely as an excuse for the *décor*, the music, and the gestures of the actors. Any merit that the experiment could be said to have lay just in the fact that it represented an effort to modify or adapt a popular *décor* in such a way as to render it more artistically pleasing, and in that it was successful.

'The masks and costumes were ingenious, suggestive, and full of novelty; but the modern music by Francis Poulenc and Erik Satie which accompanied the performance was the chief factor in the general effect. Of its qualities as music we are unfortunately not qualified to speak. At least it seemed admirably fitted to the expression of the farcical spirit in which the whole production was conceived. For us it constituted a sort of revelation of all the fun which, with a little ingenuity, even a grown-up person could get out of a combination of sounds.

'It may be that M. Cocteau's experiment was quite devoid of any real artistic importance; as an experiment it was, however, interesting, and, for those who are not above laughing at something quite foolish, extremely amusing.'

READERS will find amusement in these lines of J. C. Squire regarding *Who's Who*.

'But if these entries *are* to be reprinted as they stand, it behooves those who make them to be more careful than they have sometimes been in the past. The pages of *Who's Who* are enlivened here and there by little bits of boasting and little turns of facetiousness. It is all very well to do it once: but when one's indiscretion or one's weak jest is to be crystallized, permanently reprinted, seen by posterity to the latest age if it looks up our name or encounters it by accident when looking for another, it is time for pause. One eminent man, for example, says that his "Recreations" are "anything but sport." It is neat, also more or less true; but will he like to imagine that misplaced little wag-gery reverberating down the corridors of time, unavoidable and unavoided whenever his name occurs?

'But these slips have their value as indications of character, and the very baldest of biographies, if compiled by the subject himself with the avowed intention of saying the most important things about himself, may give a valuable clue. How would Shakespeare have registered himself in *Who's Who*? As it happens, even a brief *Who's Who* biography of him would probably give us new facts: but in what proportion would he have viewed the main events of his life? Many controversies might have been avoided if he had left us something like this:

'Shakespeare, William, Theatrical Manager and Landed Proprietor; *b.* Stratford-on-Avon, Dec. 2, 1564; *e.s.* of John Shakespeare, sometime Mayor of Stratford, and Mary Arden; *Educ.*: Stratford Grammar School (Lucy Medal for Greek verse and Head of the School); *m.* Anne, *d.* of John Hathaway. Came to London at seventeen, and after several years' acting and miscellaneous writing entered into partnership with R. Burbage at Globe Theatre. Now sleeping partner and living at Stratford. *Publications*: *Venus and Adonis*, *Rape of Lucrece*, various plays. *Recreations*: every kind of field sport, large black pig breeding, sculling. *Politics*: none.

'And even where our information is considerable, as it is about Milton, an account like this would have given us, far better than any letters, a notion as to what he thought of his own occupations.'

[*The London Mercury*]
WILLIAM COWPER

BY ROBERT LYND

COWPER has the charm of littleness. His life and genius were on the miniature scale, though his tragedy was a burden for Atlas. He has left several pictures of himself in his letters, all of which make one see him as a veritable Tom Thumb among Christians. He wrote, he tells us, at Olney, in 'a summer-house not much bigger than a sedan chair.' At an earlier date, when he was living at Huntingdon, he compared himself to 'a Thames wherry in a world full of tempest and commotion,' and congratulated himself on 'the creek I have put into and the snugness it affords me.' His very clothes suggested that he was the inhabitant of a plaything world. 'Green and buff,' he declared, 'are colors in which I am oftener seen than in any others, and are become almost as natural to me as a parrot.' 'My thoughts,' he informed the Reverend John Newton, 'are clad in a sober livery, for the most part as grave as that of a bishop's servants'; but his body was dressed in parrot's colors, and his bald head was bagged or in a white cap.

If he requested one of his friends to send him anything from town, it was usually some little thing, such as a 'genteelish toothpick case,' a handsome stock-buckle, a new hat,—'not a round slouch, which I abhor, but a smart well-cocked fashionable affair,'—or a cuckoo clock. He seems to have shared Wordsworth's taste for the last of these. Are we not told that Wordsworth died as his favorite cuckoo

clock was striking noon? Cowper may almost be said, so far as his tastes and travels are concerned, to have lived in a cage. He never ventured outside England, and even of England he knew only a few of the southern counties. 'I have lived much at Southampton,' he boasted at the age of sixty, 'have slept and caught a sore throat at Lyndhurst, and have swum in the bay of Weymouth.' That was his grand tour. He made a journey to Eastham, near Chichester, about the time of this boast, and confessed that, as he drove with Mrs. Unwin over the downs by moonlight, 'I myself was a little daunted by the tremendous height of the Sussex hills, in comparison of which all that I had seen elsewhere are dwarfs.'

He went on a visit to some relations on the coast of Norfolk a few years later, and, writing to Lady Hesketh, lamented: 'I shall never see Weston more. I have been tossed like a ball into a far country, from which there is no rebound for me.' Who but the little recluse of a little world could think of Norfolk as a far country and shake with alarm before the 'tremendous height' of the Sussex downs?

'We are strange creatures, my little friend,' Cowper once wrote to Christopher Rowley; 'everything that we do is in reality important, though half that we do seems to be push-pin.' Here we see one of the main reasons of Cowper's eternal attractiveness. He played at push-pin during most of his life, but he did so in full consciousness of the background of doom.

I do not mean to suggest that he had no care-free inclination to trifling. Even in the days when he was studying law in the Temple, he dined every Thursday with six of his old school fellows at the Nonsense Club. His essays in Bonnell Thornton and Coleman's paper, the *Connoisseur*, written some time before he went mad and tried to hang himself in a garret, lead one to believe that, if it had not been for his breakdown, he might have equaled or surpassed Addison as a master of light prose. He was something of the traditional idle apprentice, indeed, during his first years in a solicitor's office, as we gather from the letter in which he reminds Lady Hesketh how he and Thurlow used to pass the time with her and her sister, Theodora, the object of his fruitless love. 'There was I and the future Lord Chancellor,' he wrote, 'constantly employed from morning to night in giggling and making giggle, instead of studying the law.'

Such was his life till the first attack of madness came at the age of thirty-two. He had already, it is true, on one occasion, felt an ominous shock as a schoolboy at Westminster, when a skull thrown up by a grave-digger at St. Margaret's rolled toward him and struck him on the leg. Again, in his chambers in the Middle Temple, he suffered for a time from religious melancholy, which he did his best to combat with the aid of the poems of George Herbert. Even at the age of twenty-three, he told Robert Lloyd in a rhymed epistle that he 'addressed the muse,' not in order to show his genius or his wit,

But to divert a fierce banditti
(Sworn foe to everything that's witty)
That, in a black infernal train,
Make cruel inroads in my brain,
And daily threaten to drive thence
My little garrison of sense.

It was not till after his release from the St. Alban's madhouse in his thirties, however, that he began to build a little new world of pleasures on the ruins of the old. He now set himself of necessity to the task of creating a refuge within sight of the Cross, where he could live, in his brighter moments, a sort of Epicurean of evangelical piety. He was a damned soul that must occupy itself at all costs and not damn itself still deeper in the process. His round of recreation, it must be admitted, was for the most part such as would make the average modern pleasure-seeker quail worse than any inferno of miseries.

Only a nature of peculiar sweetness could charm us from the atmosphere of endless sermons and hymns in which Cowper learned to be happy in the Unwins' Huntingdon home. Breakfast, he tells us, was between eight and nine. Then, 'till eleven, we read either the Scripture, or the sermons of some faithful preacher of those holy mysteries.' Church was at eleven. After that he was at liberty to read, walk, ride, or work in the garden till the three o'clock dinner. Then to the garden, 'where with Mrs. Unwin and her son I have generally the pleasure of religious conversation till tea-time.' After tea came a four-mile walk, and 'at night we read and converse, as before, till supper, and commonly finish the evening either with hymns or a sermon; and last of all the family are called to prayers.'

In those days, it may be, evangelical religion had some of the attractions of a new discovery. Theories of religion were probably as exciting a theme of discussion in the age of Wesley as theories of art and literature in the age of cubism and *vers libre*. One has to remember this in order to be able to realize that, as Cowper said, 'such a life as th's is consistent with

the utmost cheerfulness.' He unquestionably found it so; and, when the Reverend Morley Unwin was killed as the result of a fall from his horse, Cowper and Mrs. Unwin moved to Olney in order to enjoy further evangelical companionship in the neighborhood of the Reverend John Newton, the converted slave-trader, who was curate in that town.

At Olney Cowper added at once to his terrors of hell and to his amusements. For the terrors, Newton, who seems to have wielded the Gospel as fiercely as a slaver's whip, was largely responsible. He had earned a reputation for 'preaching people mad,' and Cowper, tortured with shyness, was even subjected to the ordeal of leading in prayer at gatherings of the faithful. Newton, however, was a man of tenderness, humor, and literary tastes, as well as of a somewhat savage piety. He was not only Cowper's tyrant, but Cowper's nurse, and, in setting Cowper to write the Olney Hymns, he gave a powerful impulse to a talent hitherto all but hidden. At the same time, when, as a result of the too merciless flagellation of his parishioners on the occasion of some Fifth of November revels, Newton was attacked by the mob and driven out of Olney, Cowper undoubtedly began to breathe more freely.

Even under the eye of Newton, however, Cowper could enjoy his small pleasures, and we have an attractive picture of him feeding his eight pair of tame pigeons every morning on the gravel walk in the garden. He shared with Newton his amusements as well as his miseries. We find him in 1780 writing to the departed Newton, to tell him of his recreations as an artist and gardener. 'I draw,' he said, 'mountains, valleys, woods, and streams, and ducks and dab-chicks.' He represents himself in this lively

letter as a Christian lover of baubles.

In this and the following year we find him turning his thoughts more and more frequently to writing as a means of forgetting himself. 'The necessity of amusement,' he wrote to Mrs. Unwin's clergyman son, 'makes me sometimes write verses; it made me a carpenter, a birdcage maker, a gardener; and has lately taught me to draw, and to draw too with . . . surprising proficiency in the art, considering my total ignorance of it two months ago.' His impulse toward writing verses, however, was an impulse of a playful fancy rather than of a burning imagination. 'I have no more right to the name of poet,' he once said, 'than a maker of mouse-traps has to that of an engineer. . . . Such a talent in verse as mine is like a child's rattle — very entertaining to the trifler that uses it, and very disagreeable to all beside.' 'Alas,' he wrote in another letter, 'what can I do with my wit? I have not enough to do great things with, and these little things are so fugitive that, while a man catches at the subject, he is only filling his hand with smoke. I must do with it as I do with my linnet; I keep him for the most part in a cage, but now and then set open the door, that he may whisk about the room a little, and then shut him up again.'

It may be doubted whether, if subjects had not been imposed on him from without, he would have written much save in the vein of 'dear Mat Prior's easy jingle' or the Latin trifles of Vincent Bourne, of whom Cowper said: 'He can speak of a magpie or a cat in terms so exquisitely appropriated to the character he draws that one would suppose him animated by the spirit of the creature he describes.'

Cowper was not to be allowed to write, except occasionally, on magpies and cats. Mrs. Unwin, who took a

serious view of his art, gave him as a subject 'The Progress of Error,' and is thus mainly responsible for the now little-read volume of moral satires, with which he began his career as a poet at the age of fifty, in 1782. It is not a book that can be read with unmixed, or even with much, delight. It seldom rises above a good man's rhetoric. Cowper, instead of writing about himself and his pets, and his cucumber frames, wrote of the wicked world from which he had retired, and the vices of which he could not attack with that particularity that makes satire interesting. The satires are not exactly dull, but they are lacking in force, either of wit or of passion. They are hardly more than an expression of sentiment and opinion. The sentiments are usually sound,—for Cowper was an honest lover of liberty and goodness,—but even the cause of liberty is not likely to gain much from such a couplet as

Man made for kings! those optics are but dim
That tell you so — say, rather, they for him.

Nor will the manners of the clergy benefit much as the result of such an attack on the 'pleasant-Sunday-afternoon' kind of pastor as is contained in the lines:

If apostolic gravity be free
To play the fool on Sundays, why not we?
If he the tinkling harpsichord regards
As inoffensive, what offense in cards?

These, it must in fairness be said, are not examples of the best in the moral satires; but the latter is worth quoting as evidence of the way in which Cowper tried to use verse as the pulpit of a rather narrow creed. The satires are hardly more than denominational in their interest. They belong to the religious fashion of their time and are interesting to us now only as the old clothes of eighteenth-century evangelicalism. The subject-matter is

secular as well as religious, but the atmosphere almost always remains evangelical. The Reverend John Newton wrote a preface for the volume, suggesting this and claiming that the author 'aims to communicate his own perceptions of the truth, beauty, and influence of the religion of the Bible.' The publisher became so alarmed at this advertisement of the piety of the book that he succeeded in suppressing it in the first edition. Cowper himself had enough worldly wisdom to wish to conceal his pious intentions from the first glance of the reader, and for this reason opened the book, not with 'The Progress of Error' but with the more attractively-named 'Table Talk.'

'My sole drift is to be useful,' he told a relation, however. 'My readers will hardly have begun to laugh before they will be called upon to correct that levity, and peruse me with a more serious air.' He informed Newton at the same time: 'Thinking myself in a measure obliged to tickle, if I meant to please, I therefore affected a jocularity I did not feel.' He also told Newton: 'I am merry that I may decoy people into my company.'

On the other hand, Cowper did not write *John Gilpin*, his masterpiece, in the mood of a man using wit as a decoy. He wrote it because it irresistibly demanded to be written. 'I wonder,' he once wrote to Newton, 'that a sportive thought should ever knock at the door of my intellect, and still more that it should gain admittance. It is as if Harlequin should intrude himself into the gloomy chamber where a corpse is deposited in state.' Harlequin, luckily for us, took hold of his pen in *John Gilpin* and in many of the letters. In the moral satires, Harlequin is dressed in a sober suit and sent to a theological seminary. One cannot but feel that there is some-

thing incongruous in the boast of a wit and a poet that he had 'found occasion toward the close of my last poem, called "Retirement," to take some notice of the modern passion for seaside entertainments, and to direct the means by which they might be made useful as well as agreeable.' This might serve well enough as a theme for a 'letter to the editor' of the *Baptist Eye-opener*. One cannot imagine, however, its causing a flutter in the breast of even the meekest of the nine muses.

Cowper, to say truth, had the genius, not of a poet but of a letter-writer. The interest of his verse is chiefly historical. He was a poet of the transition to Wordsworth and the revolutionists, and was a mouthpiece of his time. But he has left only a tiny quantity of memorable verse. Lamb has often been quoted in his favor. 'I have,' he wrote to Coleridge in 1796, 'been reading *The Task* with fresh delight. I am glad you love Cowper. I could forgive a man for not enjoying Milton, but I would not call that man my friend who should be offended with the "divine chit-chat of Cowper."' Lamb it should be remembered, was only twenty-one when he wrote this, and Cowper's verse had still the attraction of early blossoms that herald the coming of spring. There is little in *The Task* to make it worth reading to-day, except to the student of literary history. Like the Olney Hymns and the moral satires it was a poem written to order.

Lady Austen, the vivacious widow, who had meanwhile joined the Olney group, was anxious that Cowper should show what he could do in blank verse. He undertook to humor her if she would give him a subject. 'Oh,' she said, 'you can never be in want of a subject; you can write upon any; write upon this sofa!' Cowper, in his more ambitious verse, seems sel-

dom to have written under the compulsion of the subject as the great poets do. Even the noble lines 'On the Loss of the Royal George' were written, as he confessed, 'by desire of Lady Austen, who wanted words to the March in *Scipio*.' For this Lady Austen deserves the world's thanks, as she does for cheering him up in his low spirits with the story of John Gilpin. He did not write *John Gilpin* by request, however. He was so delighted on hearing the story that he lay awake half the night laughing at it, and the next day he felt compelled to sit down and write it out as a ballad 'Strange as it may seem,' he afterwards said of it, 'the most ludicrous lines I ever wrote have been written in the saddest mood, and but for that saddest mood, perhaps, had never been written at all.' 'The grinner at *John Gilpin*,' he said in another letter, 'little dream what the author sometimes suffers. How I hated myself yesterday for having ever written it!'

It was the publication of *The Task* and *John Gilpin* that made Cowper famous. It is not *The Task* that keeps him famous to-day. There is, it seems to me, more of the divine fire in any half-dozen of his good letters than there is in the entire six books of *The Task*. One has only to read the argument at the top of the third book, called 'The Garden' in order to see in what a dreary didactic 'spirit it is written. Here is the argument in full:

Self-recollection and reproof — Address to domestic happiness — Some account of myself — The vanity of many of the pursuits which are accounted wise — Justification of my censures — Divine illumination necessary to the most expert philosopher — The question, what is truth? answered by other questions — Domestic happiness addressed again — Few lovers of the country — My tame hare — Occupations of a retired gentleman in the garden — Pruning — Framing — Greenhouse — Sowing of flower-seeds — The

country preferable to the town even in the winter — Reasons why it is deserted at that season — Ruinous effects of gaming and of expensive improvement — Book concludes with an apostrophe to the metropolis.

It is true that, in the intervals of addresses to domestic happiness and apostrophes to the metropolis, there is plenty of room here for Virgilian verse if Cowper had had the genius for it. Unfortunately, when he writes about his garden, he too often writes about it as prosaically as a contributor to a gardening paper. His description of the making of a hot frame is merely a blank-verse paraphrase of the commonest prose. First, he tells us,

The stable yields a stercoraceous heap,
Impregnated with quick fermenting salts,
And potent to resist the freezing blast;
For, ere the beech and elm have cast their leaf
Deciduous, when now November dark
Checks vegetation in the torpid plant,
Expos'd to his cold breath, the task begins.
Warily, therefore, and with prudent heed
He seeks a favor'd spot; that where he builds
Th' agglomerated pile his frame may front
The sun's meridian disk, and at the back
Enjoy close shelter, wall, or reeds, or hedge
Impervious to the wind.

Having further prepared the ground,

Th' uplifted frame, compact at every joint,
And overlaid with clear translucent glass,
He settles next upon the sloping mount,
Whose sharp declivity shoots off secure
From the dash'd pane the deluge as it falls.

The writing of blank verse puts the poet to the severest test, and Cowper does not survive the test. Had *The Task* been written in couplets, he might have been forced to sharpen his wit by the necessity of rhyme. As it is, he is merely ponderous — a snail of imagination laboring under a heavy shell of eloquence. In the fragment called 'Yardley Oak' he undoubtedly achieved something worthier of a distant disciple of Milton. But I do not think he was ever sufficiently pre-

occupied with poetry to be a good poet. He had even ceased to read poetry by the time he began in earnest to write it. 'I reckon it,' he wrote in 1781, 'among my principal advantages, as a composer of verses, that I have not read an English poet these thirteen years, and but one these thirty years.'

So mild was his interest in his contemporaries that he had never heard Collins's name till he read about him in Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*. Though descended from Donne, — his mother was Anne Donne, — he was apparently more interested in Churchill and Beattie than in him. His one great poetical master in English was Milton, Johnson's disparagement of whom he resented with amusing vehemence. He was probably the least bookish poet who had ever had a classical education. He described himself in a letter to the Reverend Walter Bagot, in his later years, as 'a poor man who has but twenty books in the world, and two of them are your brother Chester's.' The passages I have quoted give, no doubt, an exaggerated impression of Cowper's indifference to literature. His relish for a great number of books is proved in many of his letters. But he was incapable of such enthusiasm for the great things in literature as Keats showed, for instance, in his sonnet on Chapman's Homer.

Though Cowper, disgusted with Pope, took the extreme step of translating Homer into English verse, he enjoyed even Homer only with certain evangelical reservations. 'I should not have chosen to have been the original author of such a business,' he declared, while he was translating the nineteenth book of the *Iliad*, 'even though all the Nine had stood at my elbow. Time has wonderful effects. We admire that in an ancient, for which we should send a modern

bard to Bedlam.' It is hardly to be wondered at that his translation of Homer has not survived, while his delightful translation of Vincent Bourne's 'Jackdaw' has.

Cowper's poetry, however, is to be praised, if for nothing else, because it played so great a part in giving the world a letter-writer of genius. It brought him one of the best of his correspondents, his cousin, Lady Hesketh; and it gave various other people a reason for keeping his letters. Had it not been for his fame as a poet, his letters might never have been published, and we should have missed one of the most exquisite histories of small beer to be had outside the pages of Jane Austen. As a letter-writer he does not, I think, stand in the same rank as Horace Walpole and Charles Lamb. He has less wit and humor, and he mirrors less of the world. His letters, however, have an extraordinarily soothing charm. Cowper's occupations amuse one, while his nature delights one. His letters, like Lamb's, have a soul of goodness, and we know from his biography that in life he endured the severest test to which a good nature can be subjected.

His treatment of Mrs. Unwin in the imbecile despotism of her old age was as fine in its way as Lamb's treatment of his sister. Mrs. Unwin, who had supported Cowper through so many dark and suicidal hours, later became palsied and lost her mental faculties. 'Her character,' as Sir James Frazer writes in the introduction 'o his charming selection from the letters, 'underwent a great change, and she who for years had found all her happiness in ministering to her afflicted friend, and seemed to have no thought but for his welfare, now became querulous and exacting, forgetful of him and mindful, apparently, only of herself. Unable to move out of her chair with-

out help, or to walk across the room unless supported by two people, her speech at times almost unintelligible, she deprived him of all his wonted exercises, both bodily and mental, as she did not choose that he should leave her for a moment, or even use a pen or a book, except when he read to her. To these demands he responded with all the devotion of gratitude and affection; he was assiduous in his attentions to her, but the strain told heavily on his strength.'

To know all this does not modify our opinion of Cowper's letters, except in so far as it strengthens it. It helps us, however, to explain to ourselves why we love them. We love them because, as surely as the writings of Shakespeare and Lamb, they are an expression of that sort of heroic gentleness which can endure the fires of the most devastating tragedy.

Shakespeare finally revealed the strong sweetness of his nature in *The Tempest*. Many people are inclined to overestimate *The Tempest* as poetry, simply because it gives them so precious a clue to the character of his genius, and makes clear once more that the grand source and material of poetry is the infinite tenderness of the human heart. Cowper's letters are a tiny thing beside Shakespeare's plays. But the same light falls on them. They have an eighteenth-century restraint, and freedom from emotionalism and gush. But behind their chronicle of trifles, their small fancies, their little vanities, one is aware of an intensely loving and lovable personality. Cowper's poem, 'To Mary,' written to Mrs. Unwin in the days of her feebleness, is, to my mind, made commonplace by the odious reiteration of 'my Mary!' at the end of every verse. Leave the 'my Marys' out, however, and see how beautiful, as well as moving, a poem it becomes. Cowper was

at one time on the point of marrying Mrs. Unwin, when an attack of madness prevented him. Later, Lady Austen apparently wished to marry him. He had an extraordinary gift for commanding the affections of those of both sexes who knew him. His friendship with the poet Hayley, then a rocket fallen to earth, toward the close of his life, reveals the loveliness of both men.

If we love Cowper, then, it is not only because of his little world, but because of his greatness of soul that stands in contrast to it. He is like one of those tiny pools among the rocks, left behind by the deep waters of ocean and reflecting the blue height of the sky. His most trivial actions acquire a pathos from what we know of the *De Profundis* that is behind them. When we read of the Olney household, — 'our snug parlor, one lady knitting, the other netting, and the gentleman winding worsted,' — we feel that this marionette show has some second and immortal significance. On another day, 'one of the ladies has been playing on the harpsichord, while I, with the other, have been playing at battle-dore and shuttlecock.' It is a game of cherubs, though of cherubs slightly unfeathered as a result of belonging to the pious English upper-middle classes. The poet, inclined to be fat, whose chief occupation in winter is 'to walk ten times in a day from the fireside to his cucumber frame and back again,' is busy enough on a heavenly errand. With his pet hares, his goldfinches, his dog, his carpentry, his greenhouse — 'Is not our greenhouse a cabinet of perfumes?' — his clergymen, his ladies, and his tasks, he is not only constantly amusing himself, but is carrying on a secret battle with all the terrors of hell. He is, indeed, a pilgrim who struggles out of one slough of despond only to fall waist-deep into another.

This strange creature who passed so much of his time writing such things as 'Verses Written at Bath on Finding the Heel of a Shoe,' 'Ode to Apollo on an Ink-glass Almost Dried in the Sun,' 'Lines Sent with Two Cockscombs to Miss Green,' and 'On the Death of Mrs. Throckmorton's Bullfinch,' stumbled along under a load of woe and repentance as terrible as any of the sorrows that we read of in the great tragedies. The last of his original poems, 'The Castaway,' is an image of his utter hopelessness. As he lay dying in 1800 he was asked how he felt. He replied, 'I feel unutterable despair.' To face damnation with the sweet unselfishness of William Cowper is a rare and saintly accomplishment. It gives him a place in the company of the beloved authors with men of far greater genius than himself — with Shakespeare and Lamb and Dickens.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has, in one of his essays, expressed the opinion that of all the English poets 'the one who, but for a stroke of madness, would have become our English Horace was William Cowper. He had the wit,' he added, 'with the underlying moral seriousness.' As for the wit, I doubt it. Cowper had not the wit that inevitably hardens into 'jewels five words long.' Laboriously as he sought after perfection in his verse, he was never a master of the Horatian phrase. Such phrases of his — and there are not many of them — as have passed into the common speech flash neither with wit nor with wisdom. Take the best-known of them:

The cups

That cheer but not inebriate;
God made the country and man made the town;
I am monarch of all I survey;
Regions Cæsar never knew;

and

England, with all thy faults, I love thee still!

This is lead for gold. Horace, it is true, must be judged as something more than an inventor of golden tags. But no man can hope to succeed Horace unless his lines and phrases are of the kind that naturally pass into golden tags.

This being so, it seems to me a mistake to regard Cowper as a Horace *manqué* instead of being content with his miraculous achievement as a letter-writer. It may well be that his sufferings, so far from destroying his real genius, harrowed and fertilized the soil in which it grew. He unquestionably was more ambitious for his verse than for his prose. He wrote his letters without labor, while he was never weary of using the file on his poems. 'To touch and retouch,' he once wrote to the Reverend William Unwin, 'is, though some writers boast of negligence, and others would be ashamed to show their foul copies, the secret of almost all good writing, especially in verse. I am never weary of it myself.' Even if we count him only a middling poet, however, this does not mean that all his fastidiousness of composition was wasted. He acquired in the workshop of verse the style that stood him in such good stead in the field of familiar prose.

It is because of this hard-won ease of style that readers of English will never grow weary of that epistolary autobiography in which he recounts his maniacal fear that his food has been poisoned; his open-eyed wonder at balloons; the story of his mouse; the cure of the distension of his stomach by Lady Hesketh's gingerbread; the pulling out of a tooth at the dinner-table unperceived by the other guests; his desire to thrash Dr. Johnson till his pension jingled in his pocket; and the mildly fantastic tastes to which he confesses in such a paragraph as,

I know no beast in England whose voice I do not account musical, save and except always the braying of an ass. The notes of all our birds and fowls please me, without one exception. I should not indeed think of keeping a goose in a cage, that I might hang him up in the parlor for the sake of his melody, but a goose upon a common, or in a farm yard, is no bad performer.

Here he is no miss-fire rival of Horace or Milton or Prior, or any of the other poets. Here he has arrived at the perfection for which he was born. How much better he was fitted to be a letter-writer than a poet may be seen by anyone who compares his treatment of the same incidents in verse and in prose. There is, for instance, that charming letter about the escaped goldfinch, which is not spoiled for us even though we may take Blake's view of caged birds.

I have two goldfinches, which in the summer occupy the greenhouse. A few days since, being employed in cleaning out their cages, I placed that which I had in hand upon the table, while the other hung against the wall; the windows and the doors stood wide open. I went to fill the fountain at the pump, and on my return was not a little surprised to find a goldfinch sitting on the top of the cage I had been cleaning, and singing to and kissing the goldfinch within. I approached him, and he discovered no fear; still nearer, and he discovered none. I advanced my hand toward him, and he took no notice of it. I seized him, and supposed I had caught a new bird; but casting my eye upon the other cage, perceived my mistake. Its inhabitant, during my absence, had contrived to find an opening, where the wire had been a little bent, and made no other use of the escape it afforded him, than to salute his friend, and to converse with him more intimately than he had done before.

I returned him to his proper mansion, but in vain. In less than a minute he had thrust his little person through the aperture again, and again perched upon his neighbor's cage, kissing him, as at the first, and singing, as if transported with the fortunate adventure. I could not but respect such friendship as for the sake of its gratification had twice declined an opportunity to be free, and, consenting to their union, resolved that for the future one cage should hold them both. I am glad of such incidents; for at a pinch, and when I need entertainment, the versification of them serves to divert me. . . .

Cowper's 'versification' of the incident is vapid compared to this. The incident of the viper and the kittens again, which he 'versified' in 'The Colubraid,' is chronicled far more charmingly in the letters. His quiet prose gave him a vehicle for that intimacy of the heart and fancy which was the deepest need of his nature. He made a full confession of himself

only to his friends. In one of his letters he compares himself, as he rises in the morning, to 'an infernal frog out of Acheron, covered with the ooze and mud of melancholy.' In his most ambitious verse he is a frog trying to blow himself out into a bull. It is the frog in him, not the intended bull, that makes friends with us to-day.

[*The New Statesman*]

AN ESSAY ON MONEY

It used to be thought by dreaming Socialists that money was all a mistake. They believed, like the old satirists, that there was a curse upon gold and silver, and that the use of them had corrupted men. Hence they had a way of advocating some money substitute, such as labor-checks, in the hope that men might no longer be dazzled into greed by the sight of the precious metals. The Socialists, it is only fair to say, had more method in their hatred of gold than had the satirists. The satirists hated gold merely because they pretended to themselves that it had destroyed the ancient simplicity of life. The Socialists were anxious, for their part, to find a medium of exchange which would entitle a man to a fair equivalent for his labor, but which would have no value, if hoarded, as a means of more and more subjecting the labor of other people to his private interest. It is possible to smile at the Utopian's dream of saving the world by forbidding the saving of money. But even the average man has been compelled again and again to do something to put a limit on the power of one man's

money over another. In ancient Greece, so great was the power of money till the time of Solon that, if a man could not pay his debts, he became the slave of his creditor. Until fairly recent times in England, the man who could not pay his debts became, not indeed a slave, but a prisoner, which was almost as bad.

To-day, you cannot with your money make a man a slave or a prisoner, but you can make him your servant. At the back of all the Utopian dreams is the protest against a scheme of things in which one man has the power to make servants of others. The Utopian looks forward to a world in which there shall be an equal exchange of services instead of the one-sided system of service which now prevails. He believes that a society in which the possession of gold in itself gives mastery is a society that must pass. He believes, even if he is an optimist, that it is passing. He sees in all democratic countries a revolt against the power of money, and he rejoices that the servant now bargains for an ever-increasing share of it in a manner for which he would have been branded as a criminal

when money was an all but absolute monarch.

The rich man, for his part, is also something of a Utopian. He, too, confesses his belief that money is a burden almost too heavy to bear. He sighs with envy as he thinks of the poor man whose hair is not turned prematurely gray under the weight of his responsibilities. He regards the poor man as a happy creature who has not a care outside his working hours, and who, if only he is sufficiently poor, has no income tax to pay. As for himself, the more money he makes, the more bills he has to meet. He cannot read books about gypsies and vagabonds without a secret longing to share 'a little of their freedom. He knows that, for the most part, what he gets out of his money is simply a momentary satisfaction of his vanity, and that this satisfaction becomes less and less as time goes on.

The discovery that money does not really make men happy is the most tragic thing in the life of the *nouveau riche*. All the preachers and moralists had been warning him about it for thousands of years, but he had never believed them. He had a firm conviction that a sunny little patch could be bought for him somewhere in the universe, if only he could pay the price in cash. And which of us does not share his conviction? The dream of living wherever one pleases, in a wooded estate by the edge of the sea, with a little boat in which one could row out on waters that were all but one's private possession, with the power to go to the ends of the world, to buy a ship or a motor-car, to see everything—it is a dream that intoxicates any of us. It is the materialist's fairy tale. There is a sort of greed of the universe latent in every man's breast. He longs for all experiences, all spectacles. He feels that a multitude of experiences is alone

worth living for. He would in one way or another be conqueror of the world. He is fascinated by Alexander, by Faust, because they are impersonations of his own golden dream. He sympathizes even with the Bishop ordering his tomb in St. Praxed's. He extends his vanity beyond death. He would found a family, and leave a name.

Alas, as the moralists have told us, there is little happiness to be got out of these conquests of glittering things! One may envy Napoleon his triumphs, but one does not envy him his happiness. One may desire the experiences of Faust, but not his fate. It is open to doubt if millionaires are happier than agricultural laborers. They have obviously a wider choice of pleasures, but they do not get the same pleasure from a glass of ale. They can purchase more enjoyable things, but they cannot purchase the gift of enjoying them. A poor child may get more pleasure from a collection of birds' eggs than a millionaire gets from his private gallery of old masters. We doubt if the possession of a first edition of *Venus and Adonis* would make us a whit happier than the discovery of those entrancingly blue eggs in a hedge-sparrow's nest among the thorns. The bibliophile will, we know, feel differently about it, but it is questionable whether the rich bibliophile is happier among his abundant treasures than the poor bibliophile among his few.

To say truth, there is not much to be gained from turning one's house into a museum. It is not the costliest books and pictures that give the greatest delight. The library of the *nouveau riche* has often been the subject of satire as a mere collection of covers. One of the most famous of rich men, on purchasing a new house, went into a bookshop and said, 'I want some books.' The bookseller asked him what sort of

books. 'Books,' said the millionaire impatiently, 'reading books.' And he ordered a roomful of them. It is related on good authority that the bookseller, who was himself a publisher of schoolbooks, had a thousand copies of 'junior readers,' 'senior readers,' and similar works, lavishly bound and sent to the millionaire's library, where, no doubt, they looked as handsome as the works of Shakespeare.

We have heard another bookseller relate as a fact that he once had a *nouveau riche* come into his shop and order a library of books, declaring that he did not care what they were as long as they looked well on the shelves. The bookseller, who also carried on a second-hand trade, happened to have in his store a heap of old copies of *Bradshaw's Guide*. He had these nobly bound in morocco, and they made the prettiest possible show on the top shelves of the rich man's library.

These may be merely booksellers' fables, but at least they have the truth of satire. Money can buy books, but not the key to books. It is the same with travel. It can buy miles of travel, but not the eye to enjoy them. Keats saw more of the wor'd in a Hampstead garden than many a rich man has seen in a tour of two continents. The responsiveness is everything, and this cannot be had for a check. One cannot buy even a nice taste in wines. 'Much can be done with a Scotsman if he is caught young,' said Dr. Johnson in a different connection. And much may certainly be done with a rich man, if he is caught young. But we frankly doubt if the money of the *nouveau riche* is worth having. It may be worth having for his grandchildren, but for himself and his contemporaries it is largely a nuisance and an offense.

We think it well to recall some of the old commonplaces regarding the uselessness of money just now when the

Chancellor of the Exchequer is levying so many new taxes on the citizens' little store. Happy surely to-day is the man who earns no excess profits, whose income is below two thousand pounds a year, who never drinks champagne, who does not smoke cigars or keep a motor-car or send telegrams. Happier still is the beggar who never even writes a letter. He does not know what it is to be persecuted with income-tax demands. He alone does not feel the state hanging round his neck like a spendthrift daughter. He tramps along an untaxed road, breathing untaxed air, and listening to the singing of birds on which no entertainment tax has to be paid. What an Arcadia of poverty he lives in!

His pocket has a hole in it, but it was not the Chancellor of the Exchequer who made it. The uppers of his boots are broken, but Mr. Chamberlain cannot break his heart. How Cræsus must envy him — Cræsus who moans that he is being turned into an overworked milch-cow for the state! And yet, when we have made every concession to the moralists, we do not find any great impulse in our hearts to qualify as beggars, and we are still quite willing to risk the woes of Cræsus, super-taxes and all. All that we say of the futility of riches may be true, but what of the futility of poverty? It may be that motor-cars and champagne do not make for happiness, but we know from experience that the absence of these things does not produce an earthly paradise. We know that the poor man who cannot afford a doctor or a seaside holiday for his sick child is not on this account happier than the rich man who can. The dream of what we could do, if only we had plenty of money, begins to awake again. What a house we should have — what a trinity of houses! What travels in what countries! And then, if our

tastes ran that way, what good we might do! The secret of the transmutation of gold into ideals would be ours. We could remake the world. We could rebuild Jerusalem, or Athens, or merrie England, in the village at our doors.

It is difficult to bring the transformation scene before the eye, especially as Carnegie libraries or model public houses seem to have left the world very much as they found it. In our nervousness, we begin even to doubt whether it is possible greatly to increase the mass of human happiness except by liberating men into a more equal world in which they themselves can shape their own fate. Till men are equal, they will be in chains; a poor man will be in heavier chains than a rich. But, in the present system, we must long for money, if for no other reason, because it means safety for our homes after our death — or, perhaps, it only seems to mean this.

Perhaps a wise Chancellor of the Exchequer will arise some day, who will introduce a budget that will result in the abolition of both. The statesman who will bring in a budget that will put an end at the same time to the riches of the rich man and the poverty of the poor man will be a Titan even beside Napoleon and Hermes Trismegistus.

[*The Sunday Times*]

FOLK-SONGS

BY ERNEST NEWMAN

THE musical critic may, and generally does, use bad language about London and its music, and especially about the quantity of the latter being, as a rule, in excess of its quality; but he is really never so happy anywhere else. I agree with Dr. Johnson in his snubbing of someone who said he

was tired of London: 'Sir, the man who is tired of London is tired of life.' I had to spend all the week before this last in Glasgow. Under ordinary circumstances that might have given rise to regrets. But at Glasgow I was one of the judges in the Competition Festival; and while these festivals have always an interest of their own, those of Scotland have a peculiar fascination for me. It is there that I hear some of the loveliest folk-songs the world possesses, and realize what a part folk-music can play in the life of an imaginative race.

There has been so much nonsense talked about folk-music, and so little sense, that the subject has become perhaps the most tiresome one in the whole range of musical argument. There is really no reason why it should be that. To see the matter as it actually is we have only to rid our minds of two root-fallacies in connection with it that have made it the nuisance it now is to most musicians. The first fallacy is that the 'folk' ever made, or ever could make, a folk-song or a ballad or anything else. The 'folk' must have been, two hundred or two thousand years ago, precisely what they are to-day — a collection of average intelligences, with a fair number of dunderheads among them and an exceptional brain here and there. To tell us that average people or dunderheads could create an immortal melody by the simple process of all taking a hand at it is to make too tall a demand on our credulity.

I cannot improve on Mr. J. C. Squire's pithy advice to the innocents who subscribe to this theory — if you really think the 'folk' can make a fine poem, call a public meeting and try. The fine poems and the fine melodies, like everything else that is fine in art, can have been made only by the fine spirits. Even under modern

conditions, with Europe one community, and with every opportunity for genius to reveal itself, the number of first-rate melodists in any decade can easily be counted on the fingers of both hands. So it must always have been, surely, under the law of averages. The best of the old folk-songs can have been made only by men who had the natural endowment of a Schubert or a Wolf; and such men must always have been few and far between. I was very glad to find Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch suggesting that most of the finest British ballads may have been written by one or two unknown men who lived somewhere between the Forth and the Tyne, and between 1350 and 1550.

I find in this theory a support for my own theory with regard to certain folk-songs, especially those that are found only in one restricted area. I have always had the feeling, for instance, that the best of those incomparable Hebridean folk-songs that Mrs. Kennedy Fraser has collected must have been the work of one obscure singer of rare genius. The law of averages is against the emergence of more than one or two supreme lyrists in a century in modern Europe. It must have been equally against it in the Hebrides of the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries.

If we dispose of the fallacy of the communal origin of the folk-song, we automatically dispose of the fallacy of the founding of a national school of music on folk-song. If it could be proved that these songs were the product of the 'soul of the race,' there might be some reason for taking them as our models. (It would necessitate the assumption that 'the soul of a race' remains the same in the course of many centuries; but a little difficulty of that sort would be blandly taken by the folk-music theorists in

their stride.) If, however, the great songs were the work of a great unknown individual, they are the expression simply and solely of his own personality and experiences; and there is no more reason why we should try to found ourselves upon him than upon any composer whose name appears in the biographical dictionaries.

The great folk-composer sang because he must; that is the only excuse for any composer singing to-day, and his own 'must' can have no more dependence on that of the composer of 'An Eriskay Love-Lilt' or 'The Miller of the Dee' than it can on Bach or Wagner. If, then, I am thrilled, as I always am at the Glasgow Festival, by the singing of the lovely Scots folk-songs by some of the competitors and the audience, it is not because I think that these songs will or can or should have the slightest influence on the Scottish composer of the present or of the future. Their value to us is simply the value of any supremely beautiful thing. They are what they are because their composers had no thought of schools or theories or traditions, because they sang out of the fullness of their own hearts. There is no other recipe for first-rate singing to-day.

An experience such as that at Glasgow teaches us a good deal that we are apt to miss in the ordinary round of concert-going. In the first place, we realize how thoroughly good a work has to be to bear manifold repetition. When a song has been sung some forty, or even twenty, times in succession, its weaknesses become cruelly apparent. A thing like one of the arias from *Samson and Delilah* cannot stand it; after the fourth or fifth hearing the fundamental commonness of soul that dictated it simply rises at you and knocks you down. Even some of the accredited masterpieces of men like Brahms will not bear the

repetition they get at these festivals. But any one of the great folk-songs seems only more wonderful after a score of successive hearings; and then one realizes the genius that must have gone to the making of them. It would be interesting to put some twenty of the leading composers of the present day to the same test — give them six, or at the most eight, notes, and tell them to write an unaccompanied melody that shall be one of the consummate, immortal things of music, as many of these old Scottish songs are. I sometimes sit lost in wonder at the terrific concentration that some of these songs exhibit. It is not merely that the tune is pleasant to the ear; if that were all there is to it, a thousand composers could come through the test to-morrow. What gives the great folk-song its unquenchable vitality is that it is the concentration into a few notes of a thousand of the deepest human experiences. We meet with the same phenomenon, as I have lately been saying, in the motives of the later Wagner; each of them limns a character or expresses a mood once and for all. In the best of these Scottish folk-songs we feel that it is the

very quintessence of tenderness or heroism or mysticism that is being distilled for us.

And a further reflection always follows. The greatest music can never be anything else than melodic. Richness of harmony will avail nothing if the melody be not the real thing. It is the melody that is ultimately the carrier of the idea; and it is in the difference between one melody and another that the difference between one mind and another, or between the functioning of the same mind at different times, is inexorably made manifest. You may bluff as you will in all other respects; there can be no bluffing here. The melody is the soul of the music because it is the soul of the composer; it reveals or betrays what he is as surely as the voice or the eyes or the mouth do. You may dress a Saint-Saëns melody in the richest harmonic garments you can rake together from all the wardrobes of the century, but the vulgarian in it will still betray itself in a hundred unconscious little ways; while you have only to listen to a melody of Mozart or of a great folk-singer to know that the soul of this man was simple and lovable and clean.

[*The Nation*]

A VOYAGE OUT OF LIMEHOUSE

OUR voyage was to begin at midnight from near Limehouse Hole. The hour and the place have been less promising in the beginning of many a strange adventure. Where the voyage would end could not be said, except that it would be in Bugsby's Reach, and at some time or other. It was now ten o'clock, getting toward sailing

time, and the way to the foreshore was unlighted and devious. Yet it was somewhere near. This area of still and empty night railed off from the glare of the Commercial Road would be Limehouse Church. It is foolish to suppose you know the Tower Hamlets because you have seen them by day. They change. They are like those uncanny

folk of the fables. At night, wonderfully, they become something else, take another form, which has never been more than glimpsed, and another character, so fabulous but reticent that it will support the tales of the wildest romanticist who rightly feels that if such yarns were told of Frisco or Timbuctoo they might get found out. Was this the church? Three Chinamen were disputing by its gate. Perhaps they were in disagreement as to where the church would be in daylight.

At a corner where the broad main channel of electric light ended, and perplexity began, a policeman stood, and directed me into chaos. 'Any-where,' he explained, 'anywhere down there will do.' We saw a narrow alley in the darkness, which had one gas lamp and many cobbled stones. At the bottom of the lane were three iron posts. Beyond the posts a bracket lamp showed a brick wall, and in the wall was an arch so full of gloom that it seemed impassable, except to a steady draught of cold air that might have been the midnight itself entering Limehouse from its own place. At the far end of that opening in the wall was nothing. We stood and looked into that while perched on an invisible wooden platform. Before us should have been the Thames, at the top of the flood tide. It was not seen. There was only a black void dividing some clusters of brilliant, but remote and diminished, lights. There were odd stars, which detached themselves from the fixed clusters and moved in the void, sounding the profundity of the chasm beneath them with lines of trembling fire.

Such a wandering comet drifted near where we stood on the verge of nothing; and then it was plain that its trail of quivering light did not sound, but floated and undulated on a traveling road; that the chasm before us was

black because it was filled with fluid night. Night, we discovered suddenly, was in irresistible movement. It was swift and heavy. It was unconfined. It was welling higher to douse our feeble glims and to founder London, built of shadows on its boundary. It moved with frightful quietness. It seemed confident of its power. It swirled and eddied by the piles of the wharf, and there it found a voice: though that was muffled, yet now and then it broke into levity for a moment, as at some secret and alien jest.

There were sounds which reached us at last from the opposite shore, faint with distance and terror. The warning from an unseen steamer going out was as if a soul, crossing this Styx, now knew the worst. There is no London on the Thames after sundown. Most of us know very little of the river by day. It might then be no more native to our capital than the Orientals who stand under the Limehouse gas-lamps at night. It surprises us. We turn and look at it from our seat in a tram, and watch a barge going down on the ebb — it luckily misses the piers of Blackfriars Bridge — as if a door had unexpectedly opened on a mystery, revealing another world in London, and another sort of life than ours. It is as uncanny as if we had sensed another dimension of space. The tram gets among the buildings again, and we are reassured by the confined and arid life we know. But what a light and width had that surprising world where we saw a barge drifting as leisurely as if the narrow limits which we call reality were there unknown!

But after dark, not only is there no river, when you stand where by day is its foreshore: there is no London. Then, looking out from Limehouse, you might be the only surviving memory of a city that has vanished, left solitary amid the unsubstantial shades by the

forgetful gods; for about you are only comets passing through space, and inscrutable shapes; your neighbors are Cassiopeia and Orion.

But where was our barge, the Lizzie? We became aware abruptly of the skipper and the crew of this ship for our midnight cruise among the stars. He had his coat-collar raised. The Lizzie, he said, was now free of the mud, and he was going to push off. Sitting on a bollard, and pulling out his tobaccopouch, he said he had n't had her out before. Sorry he'd got to do it now. She was a bitch. She bucked her other man overboard three days ago. They had n't found him yet. They found her down by Gallions Reach. Jack Jones was the other chap. Old Rarzo they called him. Took more than a little to give him that color. But he was all right. They were going to have a benefit concert for his wife and kids. Jack's brother was going to sing: good as Harry Lauder, he is.

Below us a swirl of water broke into mirth, instantly suppressed. We could see the Lizzie now. The ripples slipped round her to the tune of 'they-'av'n't-found-'im-yet, they-'av'n't-found-'im-yet—they 'av'n't.' The skipper and crew rose, fumbling at his feet for a rope. There did not seem to be much of the Lizzie. She was but a little raft to drift out on the tides which moved among the stars. 'Now's your chance,' said her crew; and we took it, on all fours. The last remnant of London was then pushed from us with a pole. We were launched on night, which had begun its ebb toward morning.

The punt sidled away obliquely for midstream. We stood at one end of it. The figure of Charon could be seen at the other, of long acquaintance with this passage, using his sweep with the indifference of habitude. Perhaps it was not Charon. Anyhow, there was some obstruction to the belief that we

were bound for no more than the steamer Aldebaran, anchored in Bugsby's Reach. From the low deck of the barge it was surprising that the river, whose name was Night, was content with the height to which it had risen. Perhaps it was taking its time. It might soon receive an influx from space, then rise in a silent upheaval; and those low shadows that were London, even now half-foundered, would at once go. This darkness was an irresponsible power. It was the same flood which had sunk Gnosso and Memphis. It was tranquil, indifferent, knowing us not, reckoning us all one with the Sumerians. They were below it. It had risen above them. Now it was laying the base of London.

The crew cried out to us that over there was the entrance to the West India Docks. We knew that place in another life. But should Charon joke with us? We saw only chaos, in which the beams from a reputed city glimmered ineffectively, without purpose.

The shadow of the master of our black barge pulled at his sweep with a slow confidence that was fearful amid what was sightless and unknown. His pipe glowed, as with the profanity of an immortal to whom eternity and infinity are of the usual significance. Then a red and a green eye appeared astern, and there was a steady throbbing as if some monster were in pursuit of us. A tug shaped near us, drew level, and exposed with its fires, as it went ahead, a radiant Lizzie on an area of water that leaped in red flames. The furnace door of the tug was shut, and at once we were blind. 'Hold hard!' yelled our skipper, and the Lizzie slipped into the turmoil of the tug's wake.

There would be Millwall. The tug and the turmoil had gone. We were alone again in the beyond. There was no sound now but the water spattering

under our craft, and the fumbling and infrequent splash of the sweep. Once we heard the miniature bark of a dog, distinct and fine, as though distance had refined it as well as reduced it. We were nearly round the loop the river makes about Millwall, and this unknown region before us was Blackwall Reach by day, and Execution Dock used to be dead ahead. To the east, over the waters, a fan of red light exploded and pulsed on the clouds latent above, giving them momentary form. It was as if, from the place where it starts, the dawn had been released too soon, and was at once recalled. 'The gas works,' said the skipper.

Still the slow drift, quite proper to those at large in eternity. But this, we were told, was the beginning of Bugsby's Reach.

It was first a premonition, then a doubt, and at last a distinct tremor in the darkness ahead of us. A light appeared there, grew nearer, higher, and brighter, and there was a suspicion of imminent mass. 'Watch her,' warned the skipper. Watch what? There was nothing to watch but the dark, and some planets far away, one of them red. The menacing one still grew higher and brighter. It came at us. A wall instantly appeared to overhang us, with a funnel and masts above it, and our skipper's yell was lost in the thunder of a churning propeller. The air shuddered, and a siren hooted in the heavens. A long, dark body seemed minutes going by us, and our skipper's insults were taken in silence by her superior deck. She left us riotous in her wake, and we continued our journey, dancing our indignation on the uneasy deck of the Lizzie.

The silent drift recommenced, and we neared a region of unearthly lights and the smell of sulphur, where aerial skeletons, vast and black, and columns and towers, alternately glowed and

vanished as the doors of infernal fires were opened and shut. We drew abreast of this phantom place where flames and darkness battled amid gigantic ruin. Charon spoke. 'They're the coal wharves,' he said.

The lights of a steamer rose in the night below the wharves, but it was our own progress which brought them nearer. She was anchored. We made out at last her shape, but at first she did not answer our hail.

'Hullo, Aldebaran,' once more roared our captain.

There was no answer. In a minute we should be by her, and too late.

'Barge, ahoy!' came a voice. 'Is that the — paint?'

[The Irish Statesman]

THE LANDLORD; A DREAM-STORY

BY LENNOX ROBINSON

(To A. S.)

It was a wonderful house. It was complete and perfect, the work of a genius, and one who, as landlord and architect and builder, was able to carry out to the last particular even the smallest of his intentions. And those intentions had been grandiose. He was passionately in love, and this house was planned and built as a home for a glorious creature. There was to be everything there that heart could desire, rooms framed for every mood, fitted to every desire of the mind and body: sunny parlors for winter days, cool, lofty rooms for days when the sun shone hotly, towers from which to gaze at the stars, and dark, silent cellars. It was curiously and amazingly furnished with objects which fascinated the senses of sight and touch, and there was the scent of flowers and fruits and spices; no room was like any other; the variety of the in-

vention of the builder was boundless; the house was at once intricate and simple—simple in its final effect, but infinitely elaborate in the means by which that effect was achieved.

And then, when it was finished, when the last detail was complete, the lovely creature for whom the house had been intended disappeared. She heartlessly jilted the landlord, fled away, and left him desolate.

He felt her loss so deeply that the idea of the house became a torment to him. He determined to forget it and her, to plunge into some new work, fill his mind with new cares; and thoughtlessly, without prevision, he let his house to lodgers, to anyone who cared to settle in it. From them he demanded no rent, enforced on them no conditions; he opened the great bronze doors of the house, let them swarm in, and forgot them.

Years went by, and, busied with new cares, his life filled with new interests, the wound in his heart healed.

But in the house things from the first had gone awry. It was not the fault of the designer and builder. On the whole the house wore well—remarkably well considering the hard, thoughtless usage it got. For the tenants were—so many of them—undesirable. Individually, even family by family, they were tolerable, decent people, but their relations with each other quickly became strained. If the rooms had been all alike, things might have gone better, but the difference in outlook, in temperature, in size and furnishing, led to jealousies, led to quarrels, led finally to death. There were dreadful descents from an upper floor upon a lower room, a horrible up-pouring from a cellar, a breaking down of partitions between rooms, rushes along passages, and a clang of weapons and bloodshed. There were negroes in one of the sunniest rooms

and all the house was against them—quite naturally, of course.

From the very first it was felt by all the tenants that the landlord should interfere. He never visited the house, no one had ever seen him, but his address was known to all. Some differences of opinion (and this furnished a fruitful cause for quarrel) arose between the tenants as to his exact address; but each and every inhabitant of the house from time to time sent him letters of complaint, letters of expostulation, letters of explanation. He was begged, implored, entreated to interfere in the affairs of the house.

And the letters all reached him. Though the addresses varied considerably, the intention of the writers was known to the postal authorities and the letters were safely delivered to the landlord. But, as he wanted to forget the house, he never opened them, and they lay there, a slowly increasing pile, day after day, year after year.

But one evening, as he sat crouched over the fire (he had grown old and a little feeble), the pile of letters attracted his attention, and he found he could let his mind dwell on the house without pain. He stretched out his hand and took a letter from the heap and opened it.

As he read it his face grew troubled. He put on his spectacles and read it again. 'Poor thing,' he murmured, and reached for another letter.

'But this is very serious,' he said to himself after he had read the fourth letter. 'How long has it been going on, I wonder?' and he dipped into the pile and drew out letters dated years and years before. 'Dear, dear,' he murmured, 'something must be done. I must go and see them and talk to them. I must talk quite seriously to them. Dear, dear! The poor, unhappy things, the poor miserable things!'

And next morning he put on his big

coat and set off to visit the house. It was a long walk and he was a little uncertain of the direction and lost his way twice; but in the afternoon he came in sight of the house. He stopped; for a moment its beauty dazzled him. 'It is wonderful, I was inspired when I planned that.'

But as he came nearer, his ears were assailed by a confused noise. It came from the house, from its open windows. There was wild laughter, and hysterical singing, and shouts and threats and imprecations, and a scream of pain and a pistol-shot and a sort of articulate sneer, and a dark body flung from an upper window. And, conquering the scent of the flowers and fruits and spices, there came to him on the wind the smell of foulness, dirt, and blood.

He sank down, faint and bewildered, on the steps before the great bronze door.

'What ought I to do? What can I do?'

A moment later the door opened and a woman came out, and in her arms was a dead child. She stared at him.

'Are you belonging to the house?' she said.

He was about to tell her that he owned it, but changed his mind and said, 'No.'

She was silent, bending her head over the dead child while her tears slowly fell.

'Tell me,' said the landlord, 'what is it like in there?'

'It is hell,' she said.

'Why do you live there?' he gently asked.

'Where else could I live?'

'You could escape from hell by dying, by flinging yourself from a window.'

'No, never,' she said, and her eyes lit up. 'For I can't believe that it's

without purpose; he must have meant something by it,—our landlord,—and he'll come some day and put everything right and make everything plain. By the beauty and sin in that house, by the glory and the pain, by the rapture and the terror, by my murdered husband and my child starved to death, I believe in him, in his power, in his love.' She paused. 'Look,' she said. 'In my child's dead hand is a letter to the landlord. Dare you have so little faith, old man, as to tell me not to send it?'

Under her scorn and faith he withered.

'Send it,' he muttered.

And he shambled off, walking as quickly as he could with his old shaky steps, the collar of his coat turned up, and his hands over his ears to shut out the noises of the house. And as he went the tears ran down his cheeks.

'The poor unhappy things, the poor deluded things!'

[*The Observer*]

HENRY JAMES'S LETTERS*

BY JOHN BAILEY

'THE best letters seem to me the most delightful of all written things—and those that are not the best the most negligible. If a correspondence, in other words, has not the real charm, I would n't have it published even privately; if it has, on the other hand, I would give it all the glory of the greatest literature.'

So wrote Henry James to Charles Norton in defense of the publication of Burne-Jones's letters. And so his representatives have acted in the case of his own. No one who had the smallest tincture of literature ever failed to feel after receiving the

* *The Letters of Henry James*. Selected and edited by Percy Lubbock. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920. Two volumes. \$10.00.

briefest little note from Henry James that it had that 'real charm' of which he speaks. The remark is for him strangely simple, direct, and almost flat; without the expansions and qualifications, all the broken surface of light and shade, which ordinarily made up the rich garment of his utterance. But, if one may dare to interpret, I should suppose that he meant by 'real charm' something like independent and beautiful right to existence.

In our day of unlimited biography, we are only too familiar with those other sorts of letters which fill the lives of statesmen, bishops, engineers, and *tutti quanti*, as Henry James liked saying, which may have many rights to existence, but never that one. They are the raw material of ecclesiastical or political history, but nothing more. They exist only for what may be made out of them. In themselves they are nothing, mere matter without form, and therefore without the only kind of life recognized by literature. To write that kind of letter was impossible to Henry James, and consequently those to whom he wrote, who, of course, were seldom obtuse or barbarous people, were in the habit from the first of keeping all that he wrote, to an unusual extent. His letters might or might not give his correspondents all they wished for as to what he was doing, or what was going on around him, but what they never failed to give was themselves. And so they survived the brief life of the facts which they had or had not given, and are here produced for us in 'all the glory of the greatest literature' by the wise generosity of his friends and the pious intelligence of Mr. Percy Lubbock, to whose editorial care they have been committed.

He has performed his task admirably. There is no qualification, or next to none, to be made about that.

His book makes two very large volumes, each of some five hundred pages. There may be—I am inclined to think there are—among the hundreds of included letters, a score or even two scores, which a judicious severity might have omitted without great loss. But there is not one whose inclusion is an editorial laxity. They cover Henry James's life from his arrival in England on his first independent visit at the age of twenty-five to a few weeks before his death. And they are divided into sections, each of which is preceded by a few pages of introduction. Many, or most, of the letters have also their own brief note of explanation. These notes and introductions, at once compact and informing, tell the reader as much about Henry James's family and friends, movements and doings, as he needs for the understanding of the letters. They are admirably done, with tact, sympathy, and discretion; not a biography, but enabling the letters to become one; exactly the right frame for the portrait to which Henry James, making art of himself with the same curious and loving observance which he applied to everything else that interested him, was all his life adding conscious or unconscious touches whenever he took up his pen to write a letter.

He spoke of himself as a confirmed spectator of life, one who looked on from the brink instead of plunging in on his own account. This spectatorship, and the method, meaning, and value of it, are the subject of Mr. Lubbock's longer introduction to the whole book. Of this again one has little to say but the monotony of praise. It tells as much as can be told of that 'Figure in the Carpet,' which, as its designer has hinted, was scarcely intended to be definable or even visible apart from the carpet to which it had

given the unity and meaning which are life as art knows it. People who mean to embark upon a course of the novels could hardly do better than begin by reading Mr. Lubbock's essay; keeping Henry James's own introduction to each separate story till after they have read the story, without which indeed it is often unintelligible. Mr. Lubbock has not carried discipleship so far as that, though he is not without a certain air of high priestly mystery, hallowing our entrance into the shrine with clouds of fragrant incense. I do not mean the incense of mere praise,—he has too much respect for himself and his master to give us anything so obvious and stupid as that,—but the subtler incense which is spontaneously and invisibly generated by these solemnities of processional approach.

It is impossible to deny that Henry James lent himself a little too much to all this. If Shakespeare and Scott would both have gained by taking their art a little more seriously, Henry James would perhaps have gained by taking his a little less. The artist always has that tremendous problem before him of how to effect a reconciliation or balance between the claims of art and life. In England the concentration demanded by art has been too commonly sacrificed to the claims of the family or the state, to practical affairs or general culture. Henry James, as these letters clearly show, made the other choice from the first. It would be scarcely an exaggeration to say that, till the last great months, he appears to have had no interests, except indeed his eager and generous friendships, outside his art and that world of sophisticated society in which he almost exclusively sought the material for it. He was the son and brother of men whose lives were given to religion. But there is scarcely a syllable about religion here; the

phrase he uses in speaking of his father's work—'Those who go in for religion should take some heed of it'—shows how entirely outside those things he himself was.

Many of his friends were men of the deepest and widest reading, but the great literature of all the world is hardly ever mentioned in his letters. Perhaps they may make him appear more indifferent than he really was. At any rate, the tone in which I once heard him speak of Shakespeare did not suggest an unmoved reader. I was standing along with him in the chancel of Stratford Church. He was silent for some minutes, and then suddenly said, looking at the bust, 'The problem of it, the inscrutable, insoluble problem! What can it all mean? The immeasurable, almost impassable gulf between the transcendent wonder of the plays and that stolid, stupid face!' The exact words I cannot swear to, and I confess the rashness and the profanity of putting words into that mouth. But the general sense, the tone, and the contemptuous glance, with which the word 'stupid' was hurled at the bust, I remember as if it had all happened yesterday, and they could not have come from one who had never felt the great tragedies.

But, after all, Shakespeare has a solitary eminence in the world of literature; and as to literature in general, the evidence of the letters must on the whole be decisive. So, again, Mr. Lubbock says he cared little for either poetry or music. Nor is there any sign in the letters that he cared enough for painting or sculpture to make any use of the prodigious opportunities of that kind which London offers. He cared only enough, very characteristically, to prefer the Titian on Ruskin's wall to its owner's talk 'wandering without a compass in a world of unreason and illusion.'

Still less did he interest himself in politics or business—some will remember his amusing confessions on the latter head in the introduction to *The Reverberator*—or in the large social problems which were growing in urgency all through his life.

The books which he describes himself as reading are almost always contemporary novels: and, like smaller novelists, he sometimes seems to speak as if literature and the novel were co-extensive terms. But, of course, he did not like novels that were primarily propaganda of one kind or another. It is true that the sharp difference which, after so many paternal generousities on Henry James's part, ultimately came between him and Mr. Wells, was actually provoked by a strange piece of bad manners. But the gulf must always have been there, even while there was a bridge across it. Mr. Wells puts it most clearly: 'To you literature is an end: to me it is a means'; 'I had rather be called a journalist than an artist.' There can be no compromise between this attitude and that of Henry James, for whom art was strictly an affair of giving form and significance to life; with ultimate results, no doubt, which go beyond the æsthetic, but which are to be attained through this medium only by not being directly sought. A man may have very good reasons for preferring propaganda to art, but he should know that the two have nearly always proved incompatibles.

At any rate, Henry James's choice was early taken and never repented. 'I know what I am about,' he wrote in 1878 to his brother William, who never did quite know, and seems often to have asked of Henry, what Henry never asked of him, the things which he had not in him to give. And so the long life which lies unfolded here has a rare unity. The stream is increas-

ingly sure of where it is going. The note is always one of increasing concentration. The intellectual and æsthetic curiosities are gathered in to bear more and more upon the novel: the universal acquaintanceship is exchanged for a large circle of friends, all in varying degrees loved and loving, understanding and understood; the citizen of the world becomes more and more in feeling an Englishman, till at last he takes the step which enables him to write so proudly, *Civis Britannicus sum*. This last gradual concentration is not the least interesting of the three. Even at the end it was not very conspicuous in manner or conversation. To one observer, at any rate, it first became evident when he read the *Notes on Novelists*, where the whole attitude toward George Sand showed that Henry James had not come of Anglo-Saxon stock for nothing. So here he writes of her to Mrs. Wharton: 'What a crew, what *mœurs*, what habits!' and one recalls the 'What a set!' which came from Matthew Arnold at the spectacle of the group in which a yet more distinguished person lived.

That and other affinities with England were in him from the first, and all through these letters one sees them slowly growing. He early decides that Europe, not America, must be his home. But Italy? or France? or England? Germany he never thought of. He was not yet thirty when he wrote from Heidelberg that it was 'well to listen to the voice of the spirit and treat one's self to a good square antipathy.' It is obvious that the cumbersome grossness of the German mind would of necessity from the first be utterly repellent to his fine and fastidious temper. The 'secret of style,' so he tells Lady Wolsley, belongs to France and Italy, and for some time it seemed that one or other of them

might be his home. But Italy made for idleness, and, besides, 'the Italians are eternal children.' France kept up the struggle longer, never indeed lost either influence or attraction; but he steadily got more and more dissatisfied with the narrow self-sufficiency of French culture, till he will even break out on an impatient moment, 'Chinese, Chinese, Chinese! They are finished besotted mandarins, and their Paris is their Celestial Empire.' So, too, he came to feel, what he told Mrs. Wharton, that French and English elements were not easily fused with the fusion which art demands. And so he turned to England, whose limitations he saw so clearly and handled so faithfully; to England and to London, where, already in 1877, he feels 'more at home than anywhere else in the world.'

By 1880 he is already saying what he was afterwards often to repeat: 'For all that they [the English] are, for me, the great race.' That affection and sense of union grew and grew, so that, when the day of trial came, his heart was wholly and utterly English, and he felt his naturalization as no change at all. Those who saw him in that, last year will never forget how strangely the ardor of the moment unloosed his halting, balancing, critical tongue. The hour of weighing and hesitating was over. 'I am so utterly and passionately enlisted, up to my eyes and over my aged head, in the greatness of our cause that it fairly sickens me not to find every imagination rise to it.' So he wrote to his nephew after two months of war; and that was the note, so sweeping, so unqualified, so emotional, so exalted, which was heard to the end in every word that came either from his mouth or from his pen.

Before the war, one would have said that no two beings in the world could

be more remote from each other than Henry James and the British private soldier. But the great moment came; the great heart was moved to its depths and set the fine and practised imagination working faster than it had ever worked before, and that seemingly measureless gulf was almost instantly bridged. How strangely complete the bridging was may be seen in a little story told me of a wounded soldier in a hospital which Henry James visited. The man had lost both his legs, and was dying, not of his wounds, but just for lack of the heart to live. The nurse asked Henry James to speak to him, and that once halting, difficult, critical voice spoke in a few moments such words of tenderness and pride that the man caught at once the new courage of life that he could not find before, and from that day went straight on to recovery.

Henry James was the last man to undervalue the hours of happiness and of achievement which he owed to his art. But it may well be that, as he lay dying on the bed to which the King's representative brought his Order of Merit, he felt that of all the experiences which the sympathetic force of his imagination had given him those few moments at the hospital were among the most precious, and indeed among the most triumphant.

[*The Bookman*]

EDMUND GOSSE

BY LAURENCE BINYON

ON September 21, 1919, Mr. Edmund Gosse celebrated his seventieth birthday.

Three score and ten used to be accounted a great and venerable age. But it is hard to associate Mr. Gosse with any thought of age; he does not look his years; he keeps a vigor and activity that many younger men might

envy; more than all, he has the secret of youthful mind, alert to fresh impressions; he has never lost the capacity of enthusiasm. At a time of life when writers and artists often grow crusty in their opinions, self-absorbed, and contemptuous of the advancing generation, Mr. Gosse keeps touch with the rising talent, and is ever ready to encourage and give the spur to the promise of youth. Not that every young idol of the day has won his applause. I think he is far from facile in his admirations; there are modern tendencies that do not appeal to him at all; and when he condemns, he condemns with candor and decision. But he is less prejudiced probably than most of us, and he is always interested. A generous sympathy with youth and understanding of its ardent struggles and disappointments is not too common; and many are the younger writers who have experienced from Mr. Gosse very real kindness, and help, and encouragement.

But we must not, and cannot, think of Mr. Gosse as one whose work is over. He is still active as a writer, and his pen has lost nothing of its natural animation. We are greeting his latest volume, *Diversions of a Man of Letters*. And it is as a man of letters,—one of a type that grows rarer in these days when writers are so prone to reform the world,—as a man to whom literature is a passion even more than a profession, and who cares most jealously and honorably for the dignity of letters and the recognition of that dignity, that we salute Mr. Gosse to-day. In all his writing the flame of this loyalty and enthusiasm burns transparent.

Brought up to be absolutely ignorant of all the world of story-books and romance, without sight of any pictures save scientific illustrations, the first chance-won glimpses of literature and art were thrilling as they could never

be to children of a later time. If this deliberate starving of the imagination seems a cruel privation, yet it had its recompense. If, reading *Father and Son*, we share the intensity of the child's disappointment with Primrose Hill, expecting a mountain absolutely carpeted with shining primroses and finding the suburban mound we know, we share too the intensity of his rapture in the first heard cadences of Virgil, in the radiant sensuous images of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*. And if Mr. Gosse, as a child, was protected by parental solicitude from the seductions of romantic literature to a degree that seems now hardly credible, he no sooner escaped into the forbidden garden than he seems to have explored its farthest recesses. How greedily, how joyfully, he must have read! And how accomplished an artist he appears already in his first volume of verse, published when he was twenty-three.

When *On Viol and Flute* appeared, he had been for some years an Assistant in the Library of the British Museum, where he first set eyes on the famous poet who was afterwards to be so close a friend.

Swinburne had fallen in a fit while working in the reading-room, and had cut his forehead superficially against the iron staple of the desk. I was walking along a corridor when I was passed by a couple of silent attendants rapidly carrying along in a chair what seemed to be a dead man.

At that time Swinburne was at the height of his youthful fame. A whole generation had been swept off its feet by the impetuous rushing music of *Atalanta* and *Poems and Ballads*. And when, a few years later, Rossetti's poems emerged at last into the daylight, it seemed that a new period of splendor had once again set in for English poetry. Mr. Gosse was not merely a witness of this dazzling movement, he belonged to the charmed circle.

In the preface to his *Collected Poems*

(1911), he has this interesting confession:

There is nothing in which fashion alters so rapidly as it does in poetry. I have followed every successive change in it with curiosity, and I believe with sympathy. I shall know myself to be old indeed when I can no longer vibrate to the music of the latest poets of our race, and I have not yet found that I am unable to respond to their challenge. But I should make a vain pretense if I presumed to work upon their lines; I admire them in their advance, but I do not attempt to follow it. . . . My technique was determined forty years ago, and what it was it has remained. I believe that a verse writer learns his business suddenly, at the dawn of manhood, and that he continues in a state of metrical equilibrium till his skill as a craftsman falls from him.

Does the belief expressed in this last sentence partly account for the fact that Mr. Gosse, after putting forth three or four volumes, deserted verse for prose? For it seems to me that whatever an artist's natural medium be, the problems and the fascination of that medium will continue to enthral him and continue to prompt fresh experiment; he will be far from staying in one place, or content with equilibrium. The pressure of actual and of imaginative experience will be always teasing his thought to discover new subtleties of form. However this may be, it would appear that prose, as a medium, has had a more enduring interest than verse for Mr. Gosse; in his prose the accent is more personal and vibrating; and as a prose writer he has shown an increasing mastery, felicity, and ease. It is in set forms like the sonnet that his poetry is most happy.

But Mr. Gosse's peculiar combination of gifts finds most intimate and triumphant expression in a kind of literary portraiture. As a critic he does not deal, like Arnold, in the large and luminous application of general ideas to literature so much as try to bring out with delicate and vigorous strokes the most expressive features in the subject of his study. He is at his

best when the human interest, not less than the literary, is engaged: he is at his very best when writing of men whom he has actually known. Who can forget such pictures as that of Walt Whitman in his home at Camden, or that of Swinburne at an evening party? It is here that Mr. Gosse's genius for portraiture gets full play with its sustained vivacity and incisiveness, mellowed by the suffusion of an imaginative, slightly malicious humor.

As a literary historian Mr. Gosse has ease and point and a light control of his material, qualities rarer with us than with the French. Few Frenchmen indeed possess his knowledge of France and of French literature; and of contemporary movements in French poetry and fiction he has been, and is, an enlightened and sympathetic interpreter. But of Mr. Gosse's many books I suppose everyone would agree that one surpasses all the rest in beauty and power; and that is *Father and Son*. There are few books of our time for which such a claim might be ventured; but this, I think, we feel to be a destined classic, one of the masterpieces, unique in its kind. The portrait of the Father in that book is something never to be forgotten, so profoundly human is it with all its extreme singularities; and it is touched with the rarest art, the finest feeling. And around that dominating yet pathetic figure how the lesser characters, even the most transient, group themselves in that strange atmosphere, each in a few strokes so alive and real!

All who love letters and the art of letters will congratulate Mr. Gosse on the ripe achievement of his busy life. He has attained the position, recognized abroad, of what one might call the ambassador of English Letters; and there is no one who could fill that unofficial post with such grace, authority, and animation.

THE GOD OF BATTLES

BY HUMPHREY HUMPHREYS

(*Beth-Horon, November 27, 1917*)

The sullen gun-roll mutters, and the
riot
Of battle dies as dusk comes dropping
fast
Her veil on hill and valley. All is quiet
Till the brief night is past.

Now swinging up the eastern slope,
Orion,
A fierce joy glowing from each jeweled
star,
Exults to see the age-long lure of Zion
Lighting the fires of war.

The immortal hunter, looking where
his lieges,
Sons of the sword, his ancient weapon
wield,
Muses of far-off fights, forgotten sieges,
Set on this fateful field.

Here strode the Assyrian spears, the
swart Chaldean
Swarmed up this classic pass, this
terraced hill,
And here the hosts of Israel raised their
pæan
The day the sun stood still.

Now up the crumbling road that once
the Roman
Wrought in the rock, from yet more
distant suns,
Drawn by the deathless call, the Eng-
lish yeoman
Hauls on his sleek gray guns.

Ah, what dire curse decreed that yon-
der city
Should down the ages spur men on to
strife,
The place so holy where the Man of
Pity
Preached love the rule of life!

Still in man's breast in grapple never
ending
The law of love the law of struggling
meet,
Christ and Orion for his soul contend-
ing
The paradox repeat.

Still must we ride the road our fathers
bled on,
By dual nature driven pursue our
quest,
Till on yon plain the last great Arma-
geddon
Ends all and man can rest.

[*To-Day*]

LET ME CONFESS

BY W. H. DAVIES

Let me confess, before I die,
I sing for gold enough to buy
A little house with leafy eyes
That open to the Southern skies;

Where I, in peace from human strife,
Will wish no Lazarus brought to life.
Around my garden I will see
More wild flowers than are known to
me;

With those white hops, whose children
are
Big, heavy casks of ale and beer;
And little apples, from whose womb
Barrels of lusty cider come.

Good food, and ale that's strong in
brew,
And wine, I'll have; clear water too,
From a deep well, where it doth lie
Shining as small as my own eye.

And any friend may come to share
What comfort I am keeping there;
For though my sins are many, one
Shall not be mine, when my life's done:
A fortune saved by one that's dead,
Who saw his fellows starve for bread.